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Summer 88

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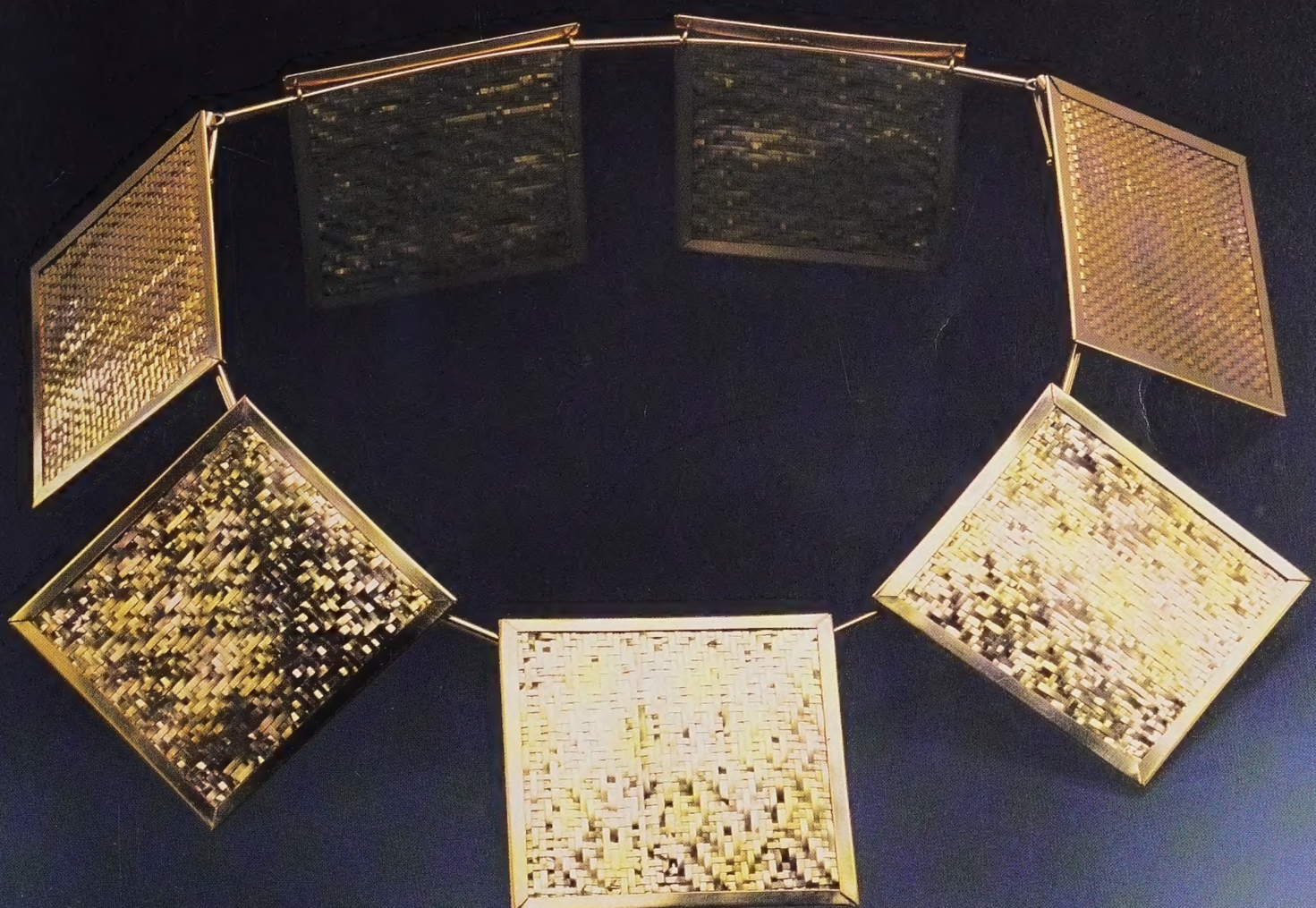

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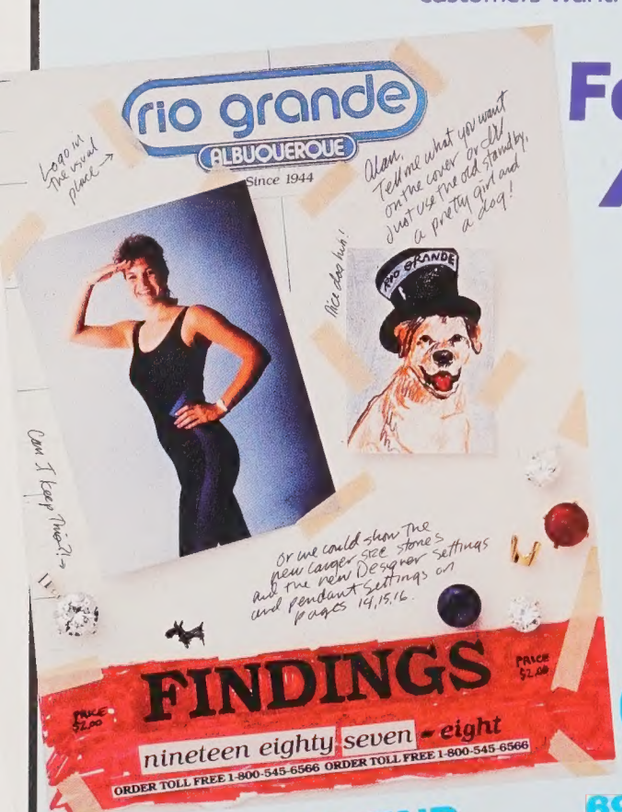

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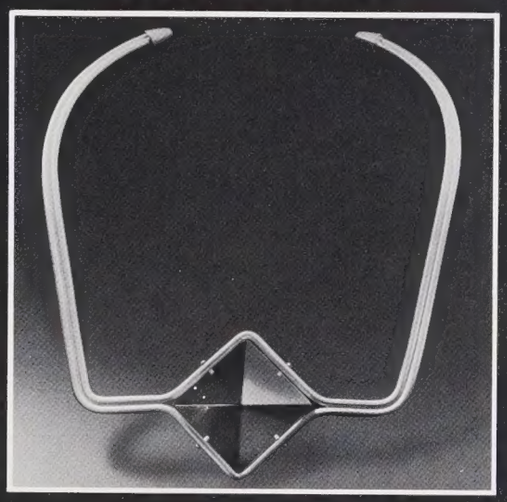

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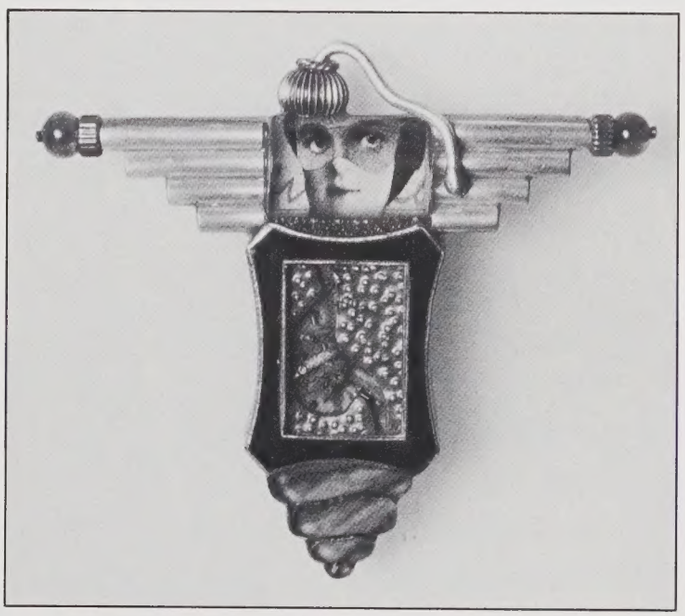

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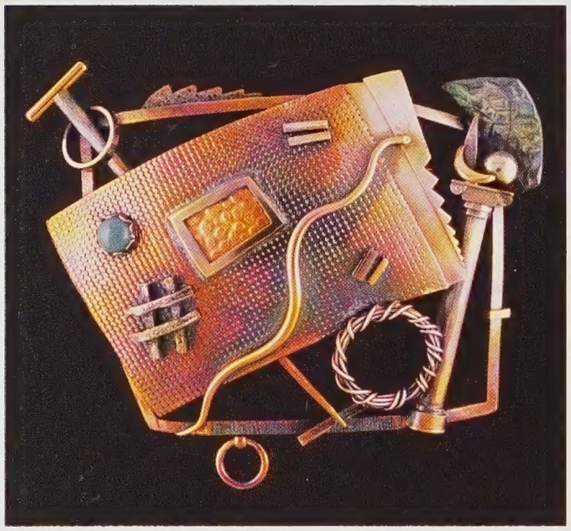

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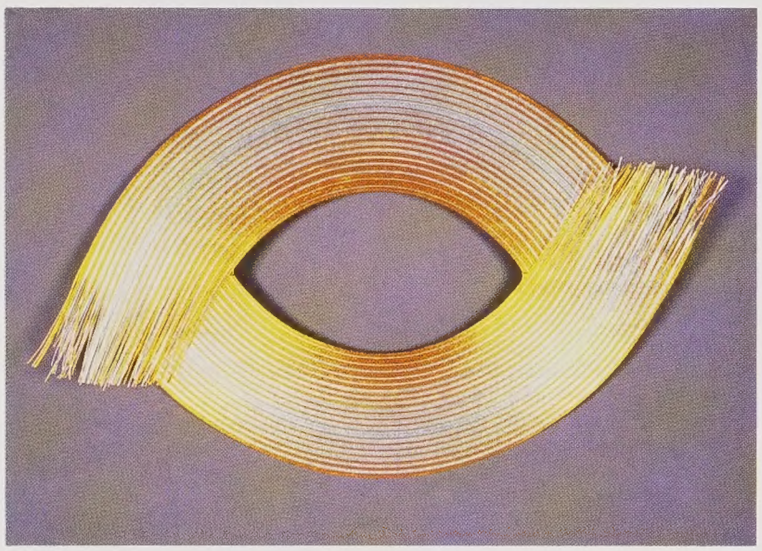

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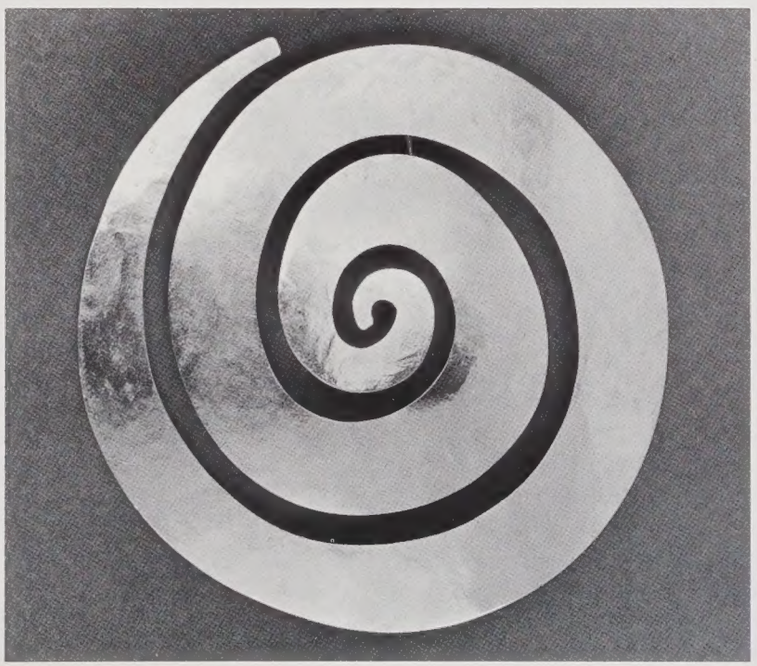

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Cover: Arline Fisch, *Seven Woven Squares* necklace, 18k and 22k gold, loom woven, 5½" inner d., 1987. Photo: Wm. Gullette, *see page 14;* **above:** Hiroko Sato Pijanowski, *Oh! I am Precious No. 19* neckpiece, Japanese papercord (mizuhiki) and canvas, glued, 27 x 17 x ¼", 1988, *see page 36;* **right:** Ed Wiener, *Spiral brooch,* handwrought 18k gold, planished, 2⅝ x 2¼", d 1986-87

Editorial

Technique and its post-industrial manifestation, technology, continues to be a volatile issue in metalsmithing. While technique has traditionally played a major role in the development of esthetic sensibility in the post-World War II era, it has also fostered debate concerning the preeminence of skill over concept in the evolution of style.

"There is something about the posing of a technical problem that suggests the direction in which a succession of solutions is likely to move," writes James Ackerman in his classic essay "A Theory of Style." "But what that something is cannot be explained in terms of technique alone; it is also a matter of formal and symbolic aims. What impels an artist along the path toward finesse is not so much a love of skill for its own sake as the conception of forms that are beyond the reach of existing skills."

Personal progress is identifiable, particularly to an individual artist. What impels the artist in personal progress is the need both to self-generate perceptions of the world and to refine tools and techniques to facilitate that realization. For example, the need to solve the problem of mimesis to create a figural sculpture is concomitant with the need to find a solution for rendering a block of stone into an illusionistic human form. When either investigation, the reflective or reflexive, proves unsatisfactory, there will be a concentrated effort to solve the problem at hand. The artistic process is not unilateral in choosing to favor either concept or technique but complementary—solving problems in a manner whereby both work in concert.

In seeking to explain why styles change, Ackerman offers the following,"Where a certain problem posed at the start of the style continues to challenge artists over an extended span of time, and only where it suggest one type of solution rather than another, the process will show progressive refinement toward the preferred type of solution." It is easy and propitious to maintain a selective reading of contemporary metalsmithing as either the solutions offered by certain techniques or those offered by certain styles, but the long view of history reflected in Ackerman's essay mitigates against such myopia. It seems that with the rapid technological progress witnessed in this century, metalsmiths have been preoccupied with the plethora of technical solutions, yet, seen alone, these solutions will lose the value that only the partnership with historical style can afford.

In the case of Arline Fisch, textile techniques find a correspondance with the rejuvenation of ethnic and primitive sensibilities, while for Hiroko Sato Pijanowski, her pioneering in the revival of mokume-gane cannot be separated from her immersion in the Oriental approach to esthetics. And for Stanley Lechtzin, the much-heralded exploration of electroforming, and now computer-aided design and manufacture, is seen as an outgrowth of his long-standing pursuit of solution to the role of the studio metalsmith in an industrial society. All three have found particular relevance for style and technique in their personal development. —SB

Teapot by Chunghi Choo, 1973, an exhibitor in "Innovations/Applications: Technological Pioneers in Metalsmithing" at Tyler School of Art, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Society of Goldsmiths in 1987. In her statement Chunghi Choo notes that after taking a summer course in electroforming with Stanley Lechtzin in 1971, she then installed a 200-gallon plating tank at the University of Iowa, where she teaches, and started producing larger scale holloware and sculpture. "Usually I made models and then cast them in wax or worked directly in the wax. These materials permit an immediate and spontaneous relationship with forms, allowing for unlimited expression in forming metal. One of my interesting discoveries while using electroforming was plated appliqué. By applying asphaltum, plating tape or any other resist and leaving areas of metal open to plate relief, a variety of intricate patterns may be made on the surface."

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ARTandTECHNICS

by Tim McCreight

There is a tendency to think of techniques as specific answers to particular problems. The logic of this thinking leads to the conclusion that accumulating techniques leads to an ability to deal with a large number of problems. However, there is another aspect that too often goes unacknowledged, the relevance of technique as process. In fact, more than that, of technique as therapy.

The question-and-answer scenario is basic to our culture. From third-grade spelling tests to graduate-level scientific research, the methods are the same. Describe the problem, consider the possibilities, find the solution. If someone has traveled this ground before, look to them for help through books, periodicals or instruction. The idea is to collect techniques to have at our disposal when we need them.

There is a good deal of sense in this, but there are dangers too. By extension we can conclude that a good craftsman is the person who has the largest collection of techniques. The ramifications of this attitude are easy to predict. Workshops and seminars flourish as craftspeople seek to enlarge their repetoire. Collecting techniques like merit badges, they move from Penland to Haystack to Arrowmont. Am I a good goldsmith, you ask? I must be—look at all the workshops I've taken!

As someone who is fond of teaching these workshops, I must hasten to say a word in their defense. A concentrated period of focused attention is an ideal forum for the explanation and development of technique. Most people who have taken a weekend seminar or summer workshop will testify to the growth spurt they experienced as a result. In so far as the accumulation of technical understanding and skill has value, these educational forums are a great place to grow.

Being a good craftsperson, however, involves more than acquiring technical solutions. By placing so much attention on the *learning* of techniques we overlook the importance of the *act* of technique, the doing of the thing. A common theme among students is a disdain for the repeated act. A few will boldly claim that they could never be happy working production. The more realistic will set their jaw and offer to work at repetitious tasks for a year or two, by way of paying their dues. How refreshing it is, then, to meet an accomplished professional willing to admit that he or she revels in the hours spend adrift in the rhythm of their craft.

For isn't this too a part of technique—the ability to sublimate the ego to work at hand? Technical prowess is sometimes not a matter of knowledge but one of feeling, the skill of allowing tools and materials to dictate a response from the maker. And how is this to happen in the aggressive world of the technique collector? The chances are it won't.

Our culture is known for its hunger for newness. Ours is the era of revolving-door fashion, of fads in food, philosophy and education. Even our children disdain last season's clothes or the passe rock band. It's typical of our culture that I recently heard someone say they wouldn't waste time visiting a museum because, "I've been there before." When this is the turbulent stream swirling around us, it is hardly surprising that the repetitious nature of technique goes unremarked.

And yet if this is our plight, perhaps it is also our salvation. The sublime pleasure of making that thousandth rivet might be the antedote for a world in chaos. There are occasions when the rhythms of nature are most approachable. For the craftsperson, these come when technique transcends questions and answers and assumes a rhythm of its own. I remember watching the potter David Leach methodically joining a spout to a teapot. It was an operation he must have performed a hundred times. And yet he sat rapt, his tongue at the side of his mouth, his attention intensely focused on his work, his eyes sparkling. And this man, at 75, was charged with more energy than people half his age. Perhaps technique, the process of technical work, was the spring from which he drew such strength.

The monks in the Middle Ages had a motto, *Laborare est Orare:* Work is Prayer. In the sense that prayer is communion with a higher plane, most craftspeople would agree.

Tim McCreight, who writes this column regularly, is a metalsmith author and head of the Metals Department of the Portland School of Art in Maine.

Mary Lee Hu, *Bracelet* #38, 18k and 22k gold, lapis, 1987

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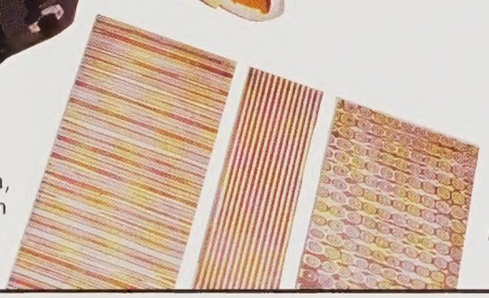

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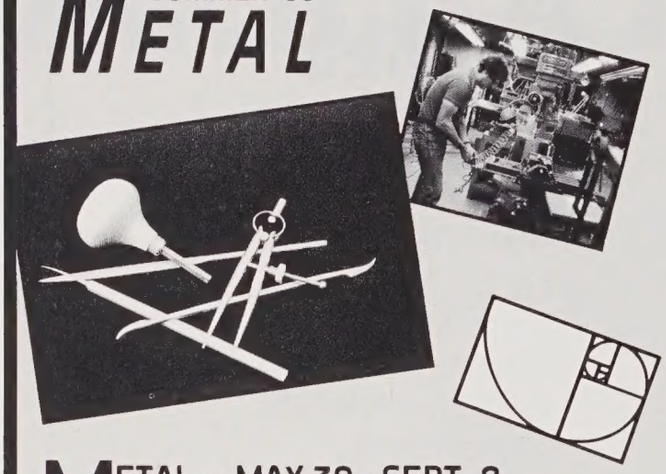

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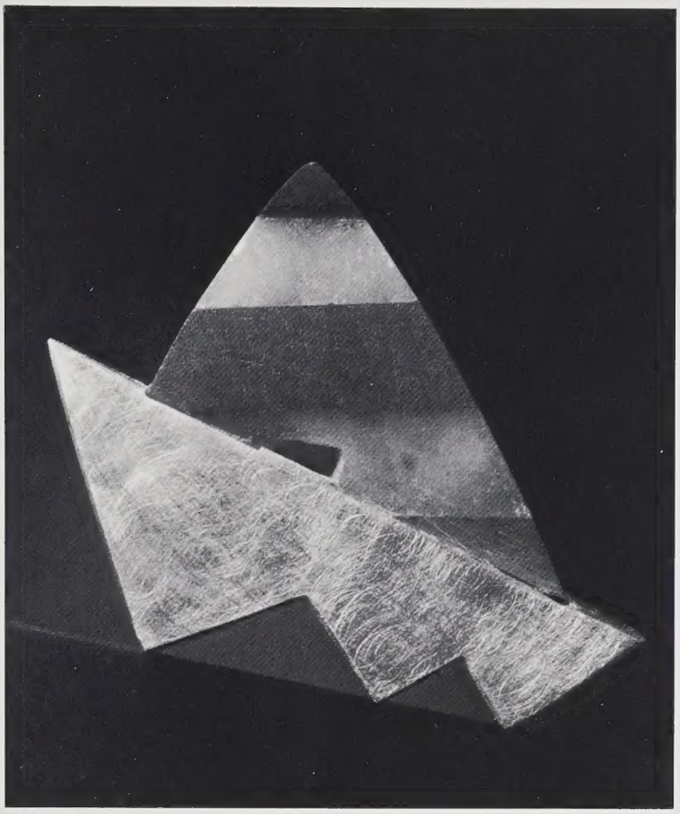

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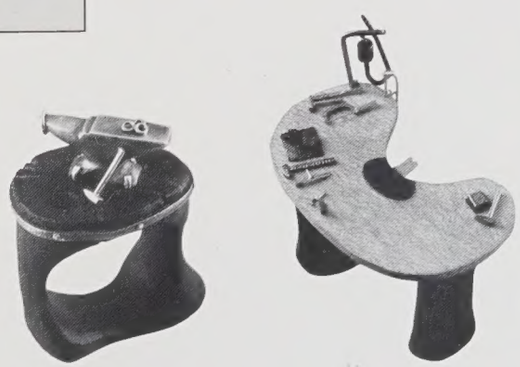

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Fads and Fallacies

by A. Stiletto

The term fashion does not immediately bring to mind knives. But wait! The 1895 Montgomery Ward & Co. catalog offered 131 varieties of pocket knives. They were classified as: "men's," "ladies'," "boys" and "men's heavy pocket and hunting." Although perceptible differences existed between categories, there were relatively slight variations within categories.

Such overproduction continues today as stylistic "innovation" invades our humblest utilitarian items—the knife, the watch, the ring, the button or the paperclip. Moralists have a field day with this abuse of creative effort, since this surplus of designs does little to improve human existence. The conclusion must be drawn that the forces of fashion, change and "difference" sustain this stylistic overproduction. The four classes of pocket knives offered by Montgomery Ward were divided not only by function but more importantly by sex and age of the user. These distinctions rested on the assumption that the consumers/users saw themselves as different according to sex, class or rank and wanted the products they purchased to reflect that difference.

In dress, fashion's customary milieu, there has been a legitimate history of style that complements obvious gender differences. Only during the brief hiatus of the 1960s did unisex clothing challenge this basic assumption. However, such differentiation cannot be applied to personal accessories such as combs, watches, rings or knives. The variety of their designs are best explained as a conformity to received ideas of what is customary and proper to men and women—to notions of femininity and masculinity—not to biological difference but to social convention.

I think it unlikely that one can ascertain differences between the way men use knives and the way women use knives—cutting and slicing is not gender specific. Back in 1895, women's knives were always smaller and had pearl or white handles to reinforce the feminine assets of cleanliness, delicacy and preciousness. In wristwatches, there is little disparity between a woman's wrist and a man's. Yet, women's watches traditionally are more delicate and ornamented. Men's watch faces are usually, strong, bold and aggressive, with Roman numerals, while women's are curvilinear with delicate Arabic numerals, colorfully bejeweled with sensuous stones. Although these themes have been somewhat modified according to the decorative trends of the time, the underlying sexual differences still pervade the orientation of both maker and user.

These vagaries of fashion, dismissed in the past as ephemeral strategies of commercial exploitation, have acquired deeper significance in the current climate of feminist ideas of representation and sexuality. In the past we held the belief that the object was the result of a specific maker's expressive intent, which found an empathetic reception by a specific user. It was a closed system of exchange between maker and audience.

Michael Croft, *Bitty Blades* #4 and #5, steel, brass, padouk wood, micarta, 1" d.

Currently, there is a growing awareness that this relationship changes as objects are read differently during different periods. Miniskirts, for example, were seen differently in the 60s than they are in the 80s. What is at work here is that the conditions of reception, relations of context and use and social conventions determine not only what is made but how it is made and, ultimately, how the user is seen in society. This shift from artistic products to representation of meaning stems from the idea that consumption completes production, that is, once a woman buys a product she not only satisfies her desire for the product but also confirms the notion of femininity implied by the product. The maker, the object, the user, the society are all caught up in the web of representation. The reality of what it is to be a woman cannot be separated from the objects that materialize her personality. Isn't that what jewerly is all about? Representation evidenced by the jewelry cannot be considered neutral by the maker; it acts to regulate and define the user it addresses, positioning her or him by class or sex in active or passive relations to meaning. Over time, these fixed positions acquire the status of identity and categorization.

The class of objects that the metalsmith engages—jewelry, holloware, flatware, tools and knives—is distinct from clothing but inseparable from fashion. In the best sense, these objects are neutral as to use and function yet ultimately bound by representation. The diversity we find in the field cannot be attributed to function, since most designs offer little new as to methods of cutting or even wearing. And an argument as to the value of the "ingenious" designer does not hold water because no matter how ingenious, by definition these classes of objects imply the complicity of a specific user. They are not self-indulgent and must take into account the psychological and social baggage that determines the user's acceptance. What is left is the interpretation of the metalsmith as a player in the game of representation, caught, as I have said earlier, in the web of significance that includes sex and class. When metalsmithing forms are characterized by strength, beauty or emotion, we should be conscious of the apparent differences of interpretation, which, in a gender-conscious society, betray a confusion of actual physical differences with attributed psychological ones. Through the design of knives, rings, flatware or bracelets, one can read the shape of society as the maker saw it and as the user adopted it. For as in all forms of representation (painting, film, etc.), the makers must be cognizant not only of the self-reflective language of metaphor and symbolism but also of the social distinction that might be invisible to them or to which they might be indifferent.

Thanks to Adrian Forty and his pioneering study *Objects of Desire*.

A. Stiletto works in and around New York and writes a regular column on fashion for Metalsmith.

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RECENT SITINGS Proposing a Burden for Jewelry

by Bruce Metcalf

". . . he would end his days . . . at liberty except for an iron ring round his ankle to show he had been afflicted by God."
—Graham Green,
introduction to *The Heart of the Matter, 1971*

A vocal faction currently claims that the limits of jewelry are wearability, beauty and salability. This faction maintains that a piece of jewelry succeeds when it serves as an attractive and decorative accent on the body, and that no further ambition is required. To ask for more is to impose an unnecessary burden.

I find such a view shortsighted and narrow-minded. Jewelry, besides providing a pleasant focus on the human landscape, has historically served another function as well: it is a carrier of meaning. In every preliterate culture that I can recall, and in many manifestations of pop-culture jewelry today, personal adornment has been used to communicate a tremendous variety of information. The purpose of ornament is rarely limited to merely looking good, so advocates of beauty and wearability as the only arena in which jewelry can act are proposing a severely attenuated field. A close examination of jewelry from any epoch and any culture in human history will serve to illustrate my point.

Because a number of engaging books have recently been published on African jewelry, including *Africa Adorned* by Angela Fisher, I'll focus on that continent. Surely, the objects are dramatic and bold, the materials seductive or ingenious, the design highly refined. The Africans can teach us a great deal about unabashed and unashamed decoration of the human body; compared to them, most of our efforts are timid. But their jewelry is like their sculpture: taken out of context and seen strictly as a visual entity, half of the work is invisible. An African mask in a museum may look purely decorative, but in its original context the mask was part of a religious ceremony. It was a visual coding for a set of beliefs central to one group's existence, and to the original audience it was as charged with as much meaning as the American flag has for us today.

The range of information contained in such jewelry is astonishing. Because of local variations in style, an individual could be identified with a particular village, and thus known as an "insider" or an "outsider." The wearer's wealth could be determined by the material and amount of jewelry worn. Often, marital status and the kinship system the wearer belonged to could be determined as well. Even a crisis or a trauma (Greene's affliction by God) might be represented. All this information is coded in the design, and would be intelligible to any local inhabitant. To casual observers—we Americans—the coding cannot be interpreted, because we don't belong to the original culture. But we still respond to design and craftsmanship. Even stripped of its wealth of meanings, much African jewelry is rich and dramatic, and we tend to react to the work in our own terms.

Perhaps it's unfortunate that we choose to ignore the coded meanings in African jewelry. Such naiveté affords us the illusion that all jewelry is just a matter of good design. And while I applaud good design, I also advocate the addition of another agenda to American jewelry: the agenda of meaning.

It's ironic that so many Africans, with no formal training at all, could create beautiful jewelry that also signifies so much. To them, using jewelry to clarify the nature of one's relationship with neighbors, strangers and God is as natural as breathing. Nor is the jewelry weakened visually by having to perform two jobs at once. Here in America, on the other hand, some jewelers are offended by the notion that they might infuse their designs with something more than wearability and elegance. With all our training and access to vast amounts of information, why is the same project that the untrained African jeweler performs without a second thought so difficult to entertain? Why does the proposal of making jewelry have meaning sound so outrageous in some circles?

People from many walks of life use jewelry to announce particular messages. When the British punks wore razor blades and safety pins, they protested the class system (by conspicuously rejecting preciousness) and simultaneously showed the self-destructive streak flaunted by their subculture. A few years ago, American preteen girls would give each other plastic charms to wear on their shoes: the most popular kids would have wonderful piles of strange items on their feet. The gay culture in New York City invented ways to communicate their sexual tastes with handkerchiefs and key rings:one position would indicate passive/submissive, another dominant and so on. These are but three examples of how people invent meaning for adornment. It's a universal activity on this planet, not an extremist idea at all.

At a recent SNAG conference, I called for more intelligence in this field's production and our ideas. My presentation was not widely approved, and some people were openly hostile. Some felt that I was attacking the basic concepts of beauty and wearability in jewelry; I was not. I was merely suggesting that the field offers tremendous potential as a vehicle for new ideas—or even of old ideas newly stated. Jewelry is a unique vehicle, because, unlike every art form but clothing, it is portable and intimate. There are rich possibilities, but those who limit their thinking to beauty and comfort only are ignoring one of the greatest purposes of adornment. If many African's know how to use jewelry to say important things about life, why can't we?

Bruce Metcalf teaches at Kent State and is a contributing editor to *Metalsmith*.

Nepalese woman adorned with indigenous ornamentation

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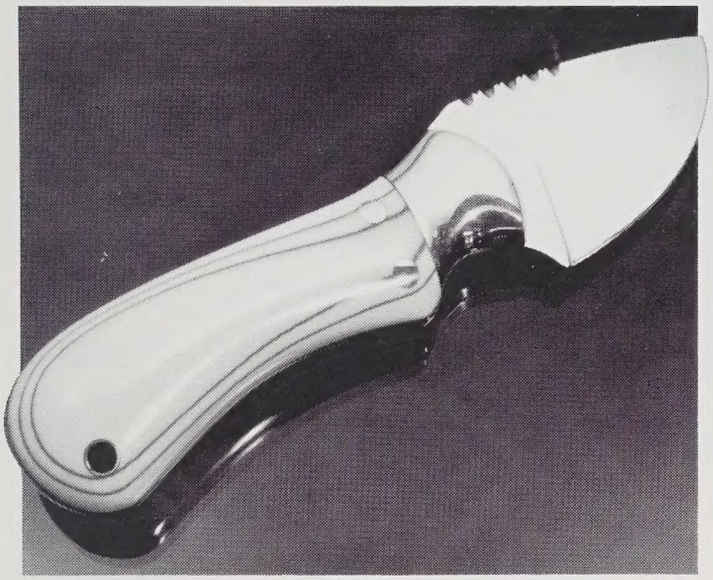

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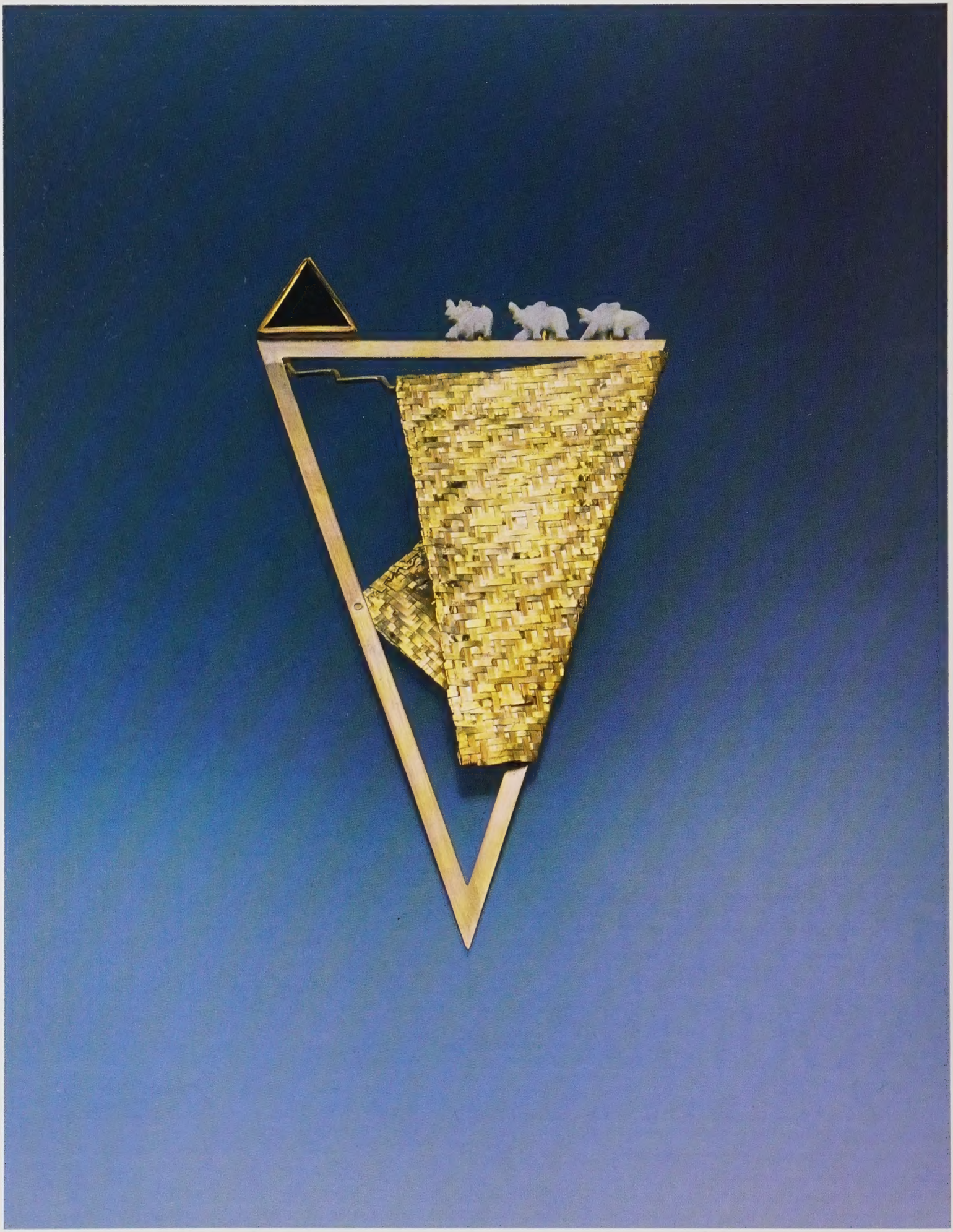


Three Elephants pendant, 18k, 22k gold loom-woven square; black onyx, ivory elephants, 2½ x 4½", 1986

ARLINE FISCH
The Art of Wearable Magic

by Jeannie Keefer Bell

The most intriguing characteristic of Arline Fisch's work, particularly the textile constructions, is their utter transformation when worn. What may appear as simple, even simplistic, knitted or woven metal undergoes a transubstantiation as it is put on the body; it takes form, animated by movement and light.

This artistic completion through wearability has received varying consideration by American jewelers. In the 70s, American jewelry was generally large, visually and technically complex and often so heavy as to be only marginally wearable. Fisch's work of the period is large, but always engineered with the wearer in mind.

Fisch makes jewelry because she in intrigued by the dramatic potential of objects that are enlivened by bodily movement. She has also participated in the trend toward demystifying jewelry as a precious, technically complicated status symbol through her integration of traditional and commonplace materials and her direct methods of construction.

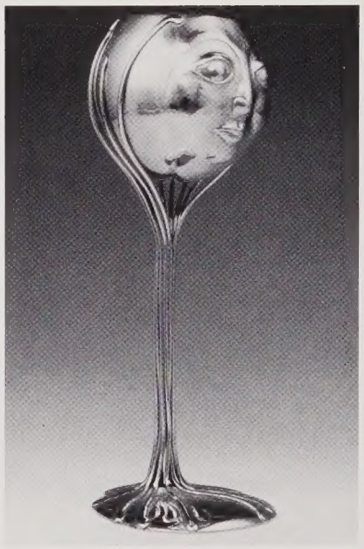
Fisch's interest in the arts began early, with a fortunate childhood in New York City where exposure to the arts, theater, music and dance was constant and compelling. Saturdays were spent visiting museums, going to the ballet or simply absorbing the environment, instilling a permanent taste for the city's delights.

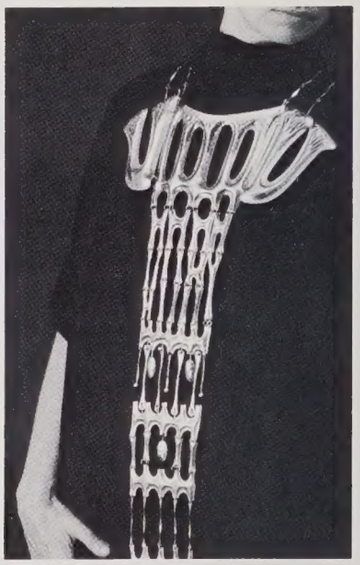
Fisch attended Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York, a small women's college with a strong arts program. She majored in art education, studied art history and did studio work in painting, but very little in crafts. As she had planned to teach at the college level, and needed a masters degree, Fisch then went to the University of Illinois, Urbana, for graduate school. She was searching for her particular niche in studio practice. An initial major in painting was abandoned after a semester and she shifted to crafts, working in ceramics and metal. Ceramics she eventually disliked, but metal attracted her interest and enthusiasm. A year and a half of metal work formed part of her degree and proved the start of a lifetime commitment.

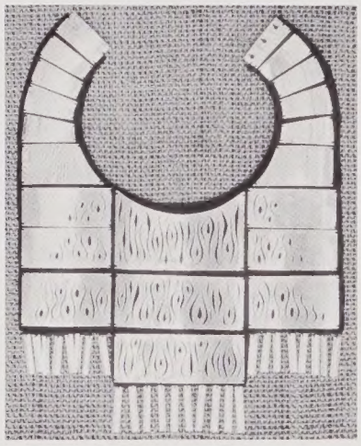
At 23, fresh from graduate school, Fisch was hired by Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, where for two years she taught drawing, painting and design. The college was near to jewelry manufacturers and many small studios. Fisch was able to rent space in a small workshop, where she could work at nights and on weekends. This period established the routine she follows to this day, combining a full-time teaching career with the continual exploration and development of her own jewelry.

A fortuitous opportunity arose in 1956-1957, when Fisch went to Denmark on the first of three Fulbright grants. She was accepted into the Kunsthaandvaerkerskoln (School of Arts and Crafts) in Copenhagen, on the condition that she learn to speak Danish! Scandinavian silver design had been revolutionized in the 1930s, and by the 50s it was considered the best in the modern world. There was initial resistance to the idea of an American at the school, as the Danes made it clear to Fisch that they thought Americans came only to steal designs and set themselves up in competition.

Hoping to study both ceramics and metal, she managed to negotiate an unusual program. She attended ceramics classes in the morning, then joined the Goldsmiths' School in the afternoon, and studied Danish in the evening. She went to a special class on Fridays where the jewelry students learned silversmithing. It was a somewhat frustrating time, as the Danish students who already had technical skills were learning design and rendering. Having design and drawing skills Fisch wanted to learn *how* to make things. A fortuitous meeting with a school director, Bernhard Hertz, resulted in an invitation to work as a guest designer in his large jewelry







Top row, left to right: *Garden* brooch, sterling silver, enamel, ivory, 3″ d., 1961; *Pendant,* silver with ebony inlay, pearl, silver dangles, 7″ w., 1964. Photo: John F. Waggaman; *Portrait* wine cup, sterling silver, raised, chased, fabricated, 2½ x 3 x 7″, 1967; *Body Ornament* worn over black vestment, chased silver units, front 45 x 12″, back 41 x 4″, 1967. Collection: American Craft Museum. Photo © Rigmor Mydtskov-Steen Ronne; **above, left to right:** *Pectoral,* fine silver elements sewn on a black velvet construction, 10 x 12″, 1964. Collection: Western Illinois University; *Necklace,* fine and sterling silver with feathers, woven construction, 1970; **opposite:** *Necklace,* fine silver, 18k gold wire, spool knit, 9¾ x ¾″, 1985

fabrication studio.

The Fulbright period finished in 1957 with Fisch's first solo show at the U.S. Education Foundation in Denmark. She had then received both a grant renewal and a job offer at her alma mater, Skidmore. Arline chose Skidmore, arriving home from Denmark with a new lexicon of skills and ideas, prepared for a position teaching design, art education, lettering and eventually weaving.

During her four years at Skidmore she continued developing her identity in jewelry. The college sent her to Haystack to learn weaving with Jack Lenor Larsen and Ted Hallman, introducing a new medium and sparking an involvement with fiber structures and, in particular, pre-Columbian textiles.

In the fall of 1961, she accepted a position to teach jewelry at San Diego State University. California at that time seemed like "the end of the earth" to her; the move there was an adventure and a challenge.

Soon after moving to California, Fisch was offered her first solo museum exhibition at the Pasadena Museum of Art. Invitations for solo shows were rare, and she took the opportunity with enthusiasm and commitment.

She had been working hard to develop her own idiom jewelry design, and to shake off some of the Danish "morality" about what good design should be.

The preparation for the 1962 Pasadena show produced some of the first pieces she felt were thoroughly her own. The "garden" pins and powder box were improvisational rather than preplanned—related to sketching and free composition. She made numerous parts, then made environments and created scenarios within them. The "garden series" was the first use of narrative imagery, to which Fisch has returned on several occasions. These works were followed by jewelry and handheld objects in silver with wood inlay—still somewhat narrative, but with a more abstract, architectural reference.

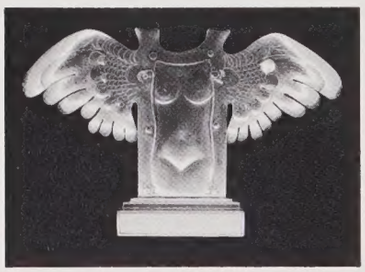
A study trip to South America in 1963 had an important esthetic impact on her work. Costa Rica, Colombia and especially Peru were particularly significant in revealing a quality and simplicity of making that stood in marked contrast to her earlier experiences. In Denmark, she found that, although the designs were simple, the construction was often technically complex and had to be technically "perfect." Technical perfection was not Fisch's primary interest or goal. In South America she found work that was vital, lively and direct; technical competence as evident, but not as an end in itself. Fisch found the experience a liberating one, giving her "permission" to work directly and in technically uncomplicated ways.

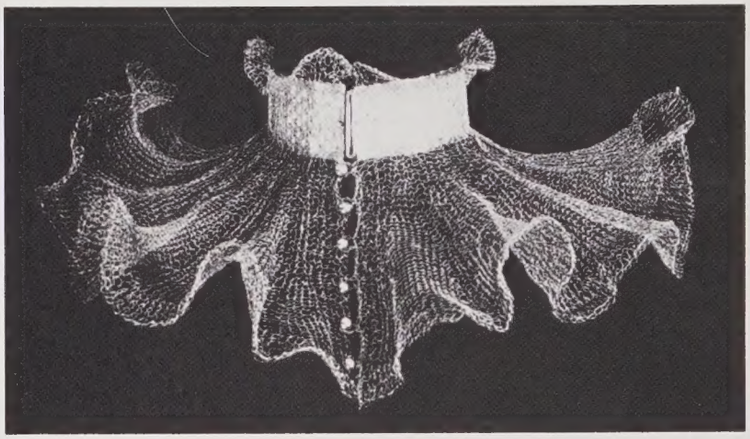
The influences from the trip found reflection in her jewelry. By 1964, Fisch had made reference to the form of language of the pre-Columbians, as well as to their structural and technical concerns, in particular, the use of dangling elements that moved and caught light.

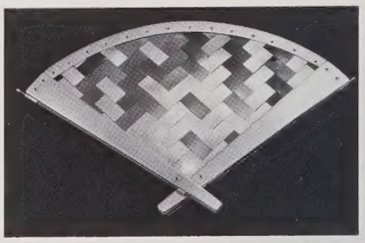
She also began to incorporate weaving in her jewelry. The first pieces were bib-shaped, woven yarn, with trapped silver elements. The designs sprang from a plurality of sources—African, South and Northern American, investigating in detail and interpreted in a personal manner. She began to think about structuring metal in woven forms—an idea to be later developed in depth.

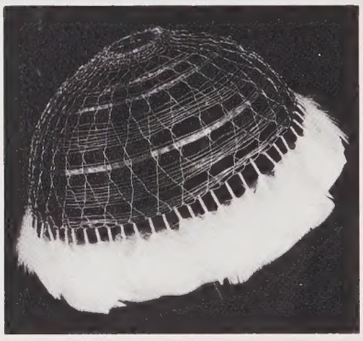
A second Fulbright to Denmark in 1966 began the next significant period of development. Fisch was by then more committed to her work and more specific in her needs and interests. This time she rented studio space and studied chasing one day a week at the Goldsmiths' School.

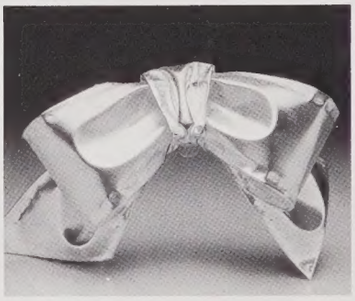
She had proposed to focus on decorative objects as well as jewelry. A special arrangement at the National Museum in Copenhagen allowed her access to the museum's collection stores. Her investigation included study at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and an extensive European tour. Folk and costume jewelry in the Benaki Museum in Athens reinforced her thinking about the nature of jewelry and ornament











Top row, left ro right: *Torso II* brooch/pendant, sterling silver, formed, etched, fire-gilt, ivory base, 14k details, 5½ x 3½", 1974; *Collar,* fine silver, knitted, 18k gold, 1975; *Fan* brooch, sterling silver, titanium, reversible (blue/yellow), 1982; **above, left to right:** *Hat,* fine silver, white feathers, woven construction, 7½" d., 1975; *Bow, Tied* clip, sterling silver, fabricated, 5½ x 3", 1980. Photo: Joel Degen; *Bracelet/Cuff MKB57/85,* machine-knit, coated copper, fine silver, crochet edge, 5 x 17". Photo: Wm. Gullette; **opposite:** *Double Zigzag* necklace, 18k gold, oxidized fine silver, braid construction, mosaic stone, 5½" inner d., 1987. Photo: Wm. Gullette

and helped consolidate the directions her own work was taking.

Fisch's work showed dramatic developments during this period. The language and technical skills of chasing were employed first in a mirror, then in wine cups, as she expanded her interest in decorative objects. She wanted to increase the scale of her jewelry, and access to huge pitch bowls in Copenhagen facilitated the new size. She produced some of the work most clearly marked with her personal design sensibility, including very large, chased, articulated silver body ornaments and the first winged pieces. She began adding feathers to the work, first in a blue and silver woven bracelet. The period set the stage for many later developments in both iconic imagery and scale. Fisch was using natural forms such as butterflies, which then developed into winged faces and torsos reflective of early American tombstone angels. These works were particularly important, as they expanded her vision and convinced her that she could do anything she wished with jewelry.

The period 1966-71 was marked by extensive travel. Dividing her time between California, Peru, London, and Copenhagen, Fisch mounted a major exhibition at the Kunstindustrimuseet (Museum of Arts and Crafts) in Copenhagen in 1967, followed by solo shows at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, NYC and Museum West, San Francisco in 1968. She was made a full professor at SDSU in 1970.

Offered a solo exhibition at Goldsmith' s Hall, London for 1971, she spend a sabbatical year in preparation. The exhibition included large body pieces: belts, woven, winged and feathered pieces, as well as objects. Goldsmith's Hall purchased two pieces for its permanent collection.

Fisch returned again to San Diego, and after much thought about where she would be permanently based, decided to build a large studio at her San Diego home.

The crafts movement was beginning to interest publishers when in 1972, Van Nostrand approached Fisch to write a book. She considered the prospect while on a lecture tour of Australia. The tour had considerable impact on the Australian crafts community and convinced Fisch to undertake the book project. She spent a year making samples and finished pieces, taking photos and preparing the text. *Textile Techniques in Metal* was published in 1975, and has become a standard text for those processes.

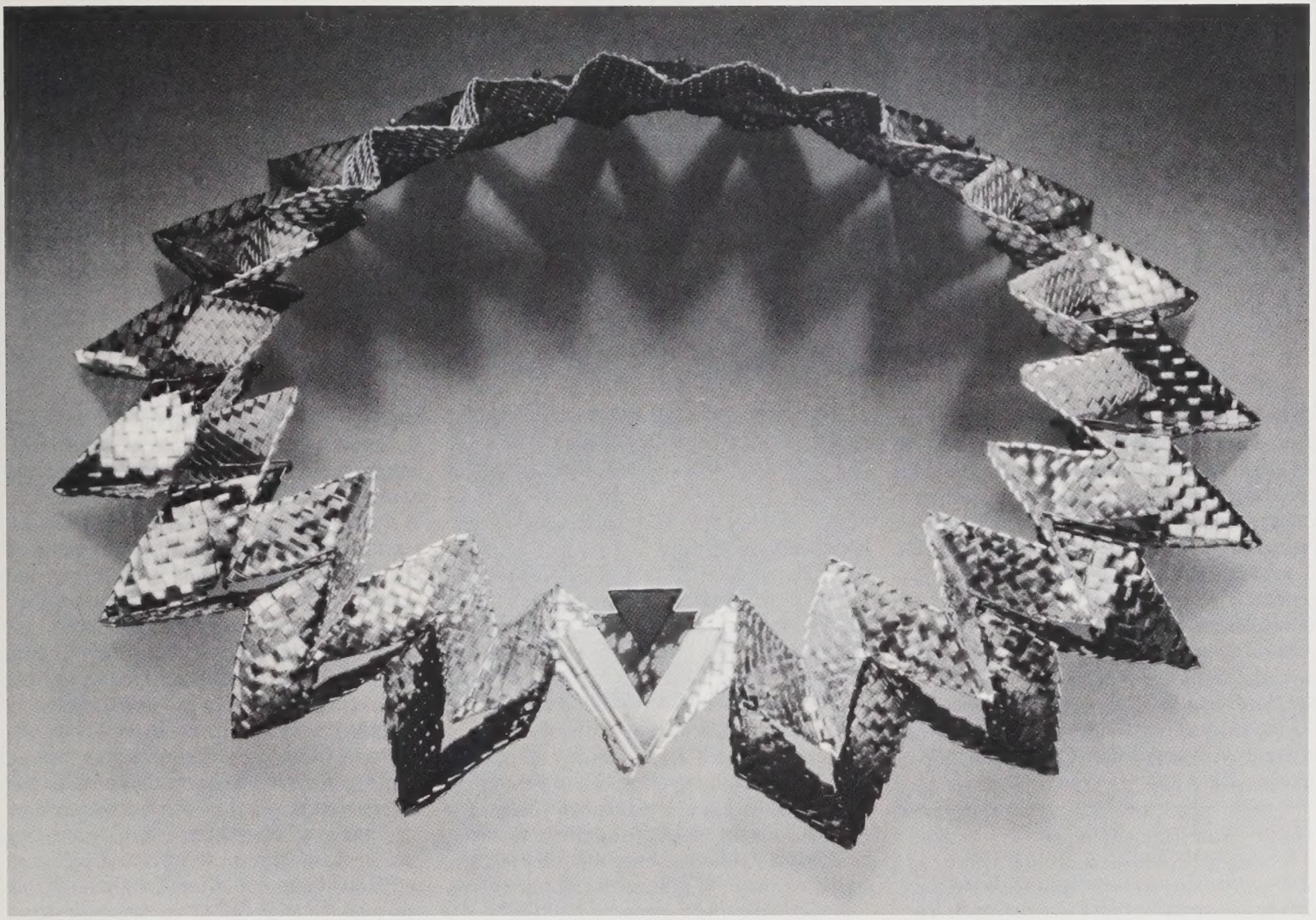
In 1975, Fisch was a visiting professor in the new Program in Artisanry at Boston University. She was continuing her involvement in textile processes, and that year produced one of her major career works—a dramatic woven and knitted silver and gold ruffled neck collar. This piece blurred the boundaries between clothing and ornament and evidenced a consolidation of her ideas and forms.

In 1978, she temporarily abandoned the textile work in a series of "elephant brooches." These works had an amusing narrative quality as tiny herds of ivory elephants marched their way over agate landscapes.

Fisch then decided to focus on the fluidity of ribbons and bows for her next major solo exhibition at Electrum Gallery, London in 1980. She spent a 1979-80 sabbatical in London with a Covent Garden studio, traveling also to Italy, France and Israel while preparing for the show.

Two significant works from the exhibition were a large silver bow and a sliver "handkerchief," complete with fine silver lace edges. Both pieces are gently amusing, with a slightly surreal, dreamlike quality. They bring a little smile when, on inspection, one finds they are not really what they seem.

Fisch has continued the exploration of "fabriclike" metal through the 80s, developing first a "flag" and then a "fan" series. These works returned to a large-scale format and employed the use of pattern on pattern—woven, printed and fabricated. She worked in a variety of materials: silver, gold, titanium, copper and aluminum.



In 1981-82, Fisch received a third Fulbright grant, to be a visiting professor at the Academy of Applied Art in Vienna. There she began to work with a technician on a knitting machine, producing "lengths" of knitted wire fabric to be later made into jewelry. Fisch also worked with woven sheet metal, producing a series of fan-shaped brooches and necklaces. She mounted a solo exhibition at the Museum Für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna at the close of the Fulbright period.

Returning to San Diego, she purchased a knitting machine and began modifying it to accommodate wires. She had decided that the flatness and evenness of machine-knitted fabric did not work well in silver. Colored copper, however, worked beautifully, producing a rich, dense fabric that was "warmer, and more human" than the silver.

Fisch mounted a solo exhibition of 75 knitted forms at Electrum in 1983. The works were exciting, but she felt there was still more potential to be investigated. She continued the development of knitted forms for a 1985 exhibition at the Helen Drutt Gallery in Philadelphia.

The knitted pieces became more dramatic, especially in color. Fisch was machine knitting with a resin-coated copper in brilliant hues and spool knitting in silver. She began experimenting with "body wraps," rather like a fine metal "skin" to wrap around the torso and head, continuing and expanding the nexus between clothing and ornament.

Fisch had been planning to do a woven gold collection for some time, as she felt that the softness and richness of gold are exceptionally beautiful in finely woven objects. In 1986, she began producing a sumptuous collection of woven gold jewelry, based primarily on squares and zigzags (see *Cover*).

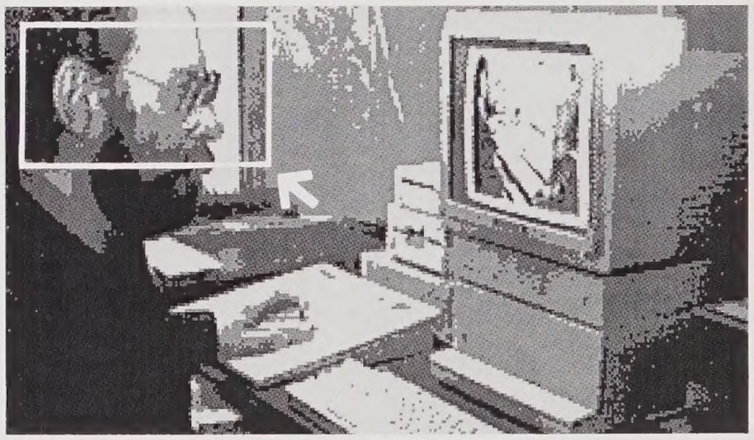
An exhibition and major catalog of this work was jointly organized by Fisch and Doug Steakley of Concepts Gallery in Carmel, California. The exhibition opened in late 1987, then toured to the Wita Gardiner Gallery in San Diego, Electrum in London and Galerie am Graben in Vienna.

Wita Gardiner suggested that they investigate a dance performance and video that would incorporate Fisch's work with music and movement. The performance was to premiere at the opening of the woven gold exhibition in San Diego. Fisch had long been interested in the concept of performance, and began experimenting with reinterpreting aspects of her form language on a large scale—several feet in size.

After many trials, she developed the images of an open square box and a woven zigzag, reflective of themes from the collection. She worked collaboratively with a choreographer and a dancer to develop a program of narrative movement in space based on those shapes. In a manner reminiscent of Martha Graham, the dancer carried, and moved through and with, the two icons in a fascinating interplay of form and movement. It was a logical, yet delightfully surprising, continuance of Fisch's concerns with the body and movement.

Throughout the 80s, her work shows a cohesiveness and clarity of ideas and a consolidation of concept, form and process. It is work that is confident, dynamic and elegant, sometimes amusing, sometimes mysterious, and always addresses her conviction that jewelry is a "significant contributor to the joy, beauty and delight of the individual who wears it."

Jeannie Keefer Bell completed her M.A. in jewelry/metalsmithing at San Diego State University in 1979. She currently maintains a business in Fremantle, Western Australia, making jewelry, doing exhibition design and writing on the crafts, and is a Vice President of the Crafts Council of Australia.



During a couple of cold winter evenings, Stanley Lechtzin and Michael Dunas examined ideas raised at the November symposium "Innovations/Applications: Technological Pioneers in Metalsmithing," sponsored by the Pennsylvania Society of Goldsmiths and held at Tyler School of Art. Their resulting conversation is published here in abbreviated form. Lechtzin has subsequently shown his video on computer-aided metalsmithing, entitled "Hands Off! Will the computer eliminate the hand?" at the annual conference of the Society of North American Goldsmiths in June, 1988 at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY.

MD: *Why are you investigating the applications of computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacture (CAD/CAM) to metalsmithing?*

SL: I'm looking for methods of utilizing the computer to minimize the amount of handwork necessary to create objects. The practicality of this is already well documented. It will not be very long before I will be able to show metalsmithing applications and therefore raise philosophical questions about the technical aspects, such as, are we engaged in a handwork activity or is the resultant object and its communicative values more important? The use of CAD/CAM points the way to a different future.

MD: *Your position sounds more like a polemic than a case for practical innovation.*

SL: I think it is.

MD: *Did your interest and concern with divorcing yourself from handwork precede your introduction to CAD/CAM or did it come about as a result of working with CAD/CAM?*

SL: That's an easier question for me to answer today than it was years ago when I was developing my uses of electroforming. I was obviously thinking about it subconsciously and the advent of the computer allowed me to realize what before could only be speculation.

MD: *Is your interest in technology contingent upon your interest in metalsmithing?*

SL: In the product of artists as well as artisans there are paradigms that overlap but these do not necessarily require hand skills.

MD: *So what then distinguishes the metalsmithing activity?*

SL: The exercise of intellect, the manifestation of the form. But nowhere is the mark of the hand seen as crucial to the definition. I think what I'm suggesting is to eliminate that confusion. The importance of an object is not in how well crafted it is but in how communicative it is of the human condition. The computer is the impetus for an integration of the process so that in the future the process will be of minimal consequence. The activity is not substantially different from that of a designer, only the product will differ.

The activity of the metalsmith, as I have now defined it, probably does not differ greatly from the activity of architects, engineers or other practitioners engaged in creating objects. They might use the same materials and the same work habits. You only know you're a metalsmith if you are producing objects normally made by metalsmiths, or the subcategory jeweler or silversmith. The activity is the same and will be rather generic. There will be more conceptualization and less manipulation.

MD: *What you seem to imply is that, like architecture, metalsmithing is defined by a historically acceptable morphology. In architecture the history of building types defines the architect's work regardless of the process by which he designs those buildings. Is that a correct assumption?*

SL: Yes, I accept that definition because I see my colleagues as producers of holloware, jewelry, functional and sculptural forms. We have our paradigms and we subscribe to using these paradigms. Therefore, as I see us moving into the computerized studio, we will continue to produce the types of objects that initially attracted our interest, but no longer will we need to master hand skills, which many of us devoted many years to acquire.

MD: *Assuming that CAD/CAM is fully accepted, not only by metalsmithing but by ceramics, woodworking, etc., do you then find any value in handmaking?*

SL: Not in and of itself. It is a romantic notion that at this time is still dependent upon many of the ideas put forward by William Morris and his friends. It was a reaction to many of the negative social manifestations that industry and the machine created in society. I do not see the computer as doing the same sort of thing, either economically or socially. I see the computer as quite the opposite, as a true creator of freedom and independence. It's inexpensive, readily available, universal in its applications; anyone who wants it can have it. Therefore the need to separate ourselves from the users of the machine is no longer important. In the past it was important to say that we are individuals capable of retaining mastery of tool and material and to set ourselves up in opposition or as an alternative to the machine product, which was seen as working to dehumanize. The computer isn't doing that and therefore there's no need to defy it; there's no need to take issue with it, and therefore we no longer need to hold onto the romantic notion of the individual working alone, producing beautiful objects with little more than their own hands.

MD: *You mentioned that the professional must take CAD/CAM seriously and you distinguish between the professional and the hobbyist. Could you clarify the difference between the two?*

SL: Perhaps a better word would be amateur in the real definition of the term. An individual who isn't engaged in these activities for significant economic gain can easily afford to produce objects using any methods that they enjoy or wish to pursue for other reasons. However, if one must work efficiently and in competition with others who are addressing the same marketplace, the advent of this technology will quickly give an economic edge to those who are using it. When I make this statement, I make it not on esthetic grounds but on economic grounds, and history has shown us that when a better tool is invented, those who ignore it go out of business.

The importance of an object is not in how well crafted it is but how communicative it is of the human condition. The computer is the impetus for an integration of the process so that in the future the process will be of minimal consequence.

MD: *You've limited the definition of an effective tool by dealing with its economic consequences, thereby limiting its benefits to a certain audience, in other words, those who are "production" oriented. Is the introduction of a more efficient tool of primary interest only to those concerned with labor/time/cost savings?*

SL: When the perceived values of two objects being compared by the consumer are equal and yet one is significantly less expensive, then, obviously, the less expensive product will drive the other off the market. I'm talking strictly economics—I'm not making value judgments. So, anybody who engages in our craft for economic gain must examine this technology very carefully. At this point, it isn't developed enough to be a serious contender for their investment capital, but soon it will be, and when it becomes that significant they will have to accept it and utilize it.

Recent issues of *The Crafts Report* have contained articles on fiberspeople who are using the computer. It has immediate applications for them because of the primarily two-dimensional nature of their work. It's easy for them to translate their drawings to the loom or silkscreen or whatever. So, we can trace the history of industrialization to the weavers in England at the turn of the century; CAD/CAM is following the same path. The weavers are picking up on CAD/CAM, but it will quickly affect all of us. Those weavers who are doing their designing and presentations and finished product with the aid of a computer have an advantage over their colleagues who are not. For example, for the commission we're (we being myself and Daniella Kerner) working on now, we were able to deliver 15 renderings when in the past we could only deliver three. Were I to compete with someone for the same commission, my 15 I think would be more impressive than their three. And if they were doing it manually, I'd have an edge. It has nothing to do with esthetics nor art, it has to do with this labor/time issue.

MD: *I would like you to consider a different class of metalsmiths—those who produce one-of-a-kind work that requires labor intensity but not efficiency, as well as those in academic metalsmithing who are investigating ideas about metalworking forms and processes where neither labor intensity nor efficiency is important. Does CAD/CAM offer anything for them?*

SL: I think that we may be embarking on a period in which that labor intensity will no longer be a useful criterion; I'm not sure that it is a clear criterion today. When we start examining it carefully, we come to the realization that people are evaluting subconsciously how labor-intensive the production of an object appears to be and assigning esthetic value to the more labor-intensive object.

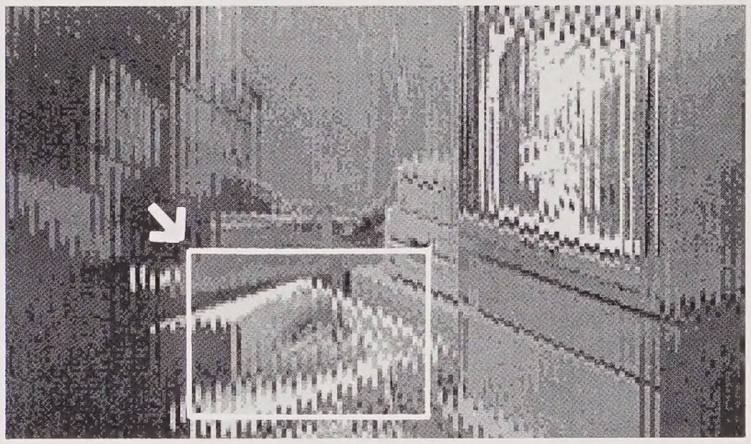
The term professional encompasses all those individuals who are in the academic community as well as those who are doing serial production and one-of-a-kind. I think, in the end, as professionals, we are all engaged in the field for economic gain; we are not doing it strictly out of a love of the activity. I'm directing myself to all those individuals when I discuss CAD/CAM and point out the importance the technology will have for them. I think at this time that labor intensity, the perception of labor/time embodied in this product, is still an overriding concern of the consumer and critic. As long as we're engaged in a dialogue between maker and consumer, then we've accepted the labor/time/value at some level and have all addressed it in our own ways. If it disappears, or if there's a question suddenly in the consumer's mind as to how labor-intensive a piece really was, then the old values, the old ways of measuring labor/time disappear. We're going to have to look at these things differently from an esthetic point of view. Now, there is going to be that transition period where you're not going to know whether the maker is using a computer or not and the products are going to be very similar in nature, but eventually it's going to be common knowledge that most of these people are using computers.

I'm working with an architect for an addition to my house. I am now assuming because of my background and my knowledge that a man who is asking for a fee to do drawings is asking too much because he wants to sit at a drawing board. And I'm looking for an architect who will sit at a computer and do it more efficiently and give me those drawings at a lower price. They're going to be equally creative and equally useful. And the same thing is going to begin to affect us in our own profession.

MD: *Could you equate the value of metal sculpture with the value of commercial jewelry—based on labor intensity and material?*

SL: If you would accept the fact that it is not a firm formula or a direct linear equation . . . the amount of work that people perceive you've put in is an indication to them of how much they're willing to pay. The mystique of the bronze casting has always been considered the classic, ultimate manifestation of the sculptural activity—why? Because it was the most involved. It took the most energy, the most assistance, the most people in order to get that big bronze cast. And so it commanded a higher price. The clay model never did; the wax model never did; the marble carving, maybe. But is the bronze casting intrinsically esthetically superior? I contend it is not. Its value is a manifestation of how much work went into producing it.

MD: *Another question on the value of labor: You have said, "I'm uncomfortable in the need to have others assist me in my work, particularly for pay or for hire, and this [CAD/CAM] potentially frees me from that aspect of this activity." Why is that of concern to you?*



SL: Because I understand the economics of exploitation. If I were to engage another individual to do some or all of my work for me, the only way that I could derive any economic benefit personally from that activity is to sell it for a price that is much higher than the price I will pay this worker to produce it for me. That, by definition, is an exploitive activity and one that I do not wish to engage in. That's a moral and ethical consideration that probably wouldn't stop many people, but it does me.

MD: *However, you know that your Marxist concern for alienated labor becomes suspect once you've entertained the idea of selling your work in the marketplace of a capitalist system.*

SL: I can't exploit myself but I can exploit others. It's a matter of definition. I can work as hard as I want and derive the benefits of my labor. This is a perfectly moral and justifiable activity, but when I utilize somebody else's hands and reward them with less than their productivity warrants, then I'm exploiting.

MD: *It seems that CAD/CAM plays an important role in your idea of a historical progression, from a primitive state of naive hand labor to a modern state of intellectual production.*

SL: The concept of progress is yours, not mine. I don't see these activities in terms of progress, I see them in terms of history. I would characterize them as freeing individuals from labor, which I consider to be somewhat onerous, something that ought to be avoided by intelligent people. I don't look to demonstrate to my friends, associates and potential supporters that I am capable of lavishing innumerable hours on an object for the sheer love of spending that amount of time. Now, I know that much of the content of craft is of that nature. It communicates this lavish expenditure of time. In some cases that may be the only thing of value that it communicates. I don't think that's very intelligent at this time in our history. If you want to characterize it as progress you're free to, but I'm uncomfortable with that term, because I don't really know how to define progress. What I'm proposing will make it easier for me, personally, and for those who wish to follow in my path, to produce worthy objects that others, I hope, will desire to own—produce them without the need or expectation that others will assist in that productive activity, whether paid or unpaid. I'm uncomfortable with the need to ask others to assist me in my work, particularly for pay or for hire. And this potentially frees me from that aspect of this activity.

MD: *In using CAD/CAM as a major tool or technology for producing metal objects, what human faculties does it enhance? What are the benefits for the creative user?*

SL: To me what I'm about to say is beginning to sound very much like a cliche, because I hear it all the time. I don't know how many of my colleagues are in touch with the computer subculture, but if you're in it at all, you hear what I'm about to say very often. What it enhances is the ability to quickly generate and express ideas. I view this as central to what an artist does. When this technology is fully realized, we will be able to process ideas very quickly and therefore generate more objects of higher quality in the same lifespan. I see that as an enhancement.

People who currently engage professionally in one of the writing crafts have discovered that once they've turned to the word processor they can't pull back from it. They know that it enhances the creative process. Very simply, we've discovered in the classroom that when teaching writing to youngsters, one of the most difficult things in the past has been getting them to go back and refine their work. It's too laborious. Give them a word processor and they're more inclined to do the polishing of their papers to an extent never before considered possible. The same thing is available now to people working in three dimensions. You can continue to refine and polish that idea until you get it right. You don't have to settle for an approximation. In the past I've always had to settle for approximations.

It occurs to me also, and here I break with the word-processing analogy, because the word processor really isn't capable of producing more sophisticated literature than the author is capable of before approaching the word processor. I think CAD/CAM has demonstrated to me the ability to do things with form that until now I've not been able to do, in much the same way that electroforming allowed me to do things that I was unable to do directly in metal. The CAD/CAM technology opens up machine tool manipulation that I cannot directly accomplish with the same machine tool. The computer is so much more versatile than I.

MD: *What interests me is your notion of ideas and how they're made real through process. For example, the Brillo boxes Andy Warhol made are indistinguishable from actual Brillo boxes, but we call his "art" because the ideas that surround them inform them as art. Brillo boxes themselves are insignificant. So, hypothetically, we can dispense with the Brillo boxes and be left with the pure idea, which would then commend Andy Warhol's contribution as one equal to a philosopher's. Do you hold that position, that art is in pursuit of the pure idea and that we can dispense with the object?*

SL: No, because we really don't care to dispense with the object. If I were interested in collecting Warhol, I would insist on having the physical manifestation of that idea in my collection rather than strictly the concept. As a craftsman, obviously, I'm a much more pragmatic person than the conceptual artist of the 60s. I value the idea, however. I value it highly. I place it central to the object, with the object as the manifestation of the idea.

MD: *But at no time are you willing to relinquish the object if the idea is made clear to you in some manner other than your craft?*

SL: No, I'm an object maker and I will not take the step from object maker to conceptualizer. I enjoy making objects, but I don't necessarily value the actual labor that goes into the making. This may be an indecisive position, but I can't go beyond it.

MD: *During the technology symposium, a provocative question was posed: if, hypothetically, the CAD/CAM process was totally*

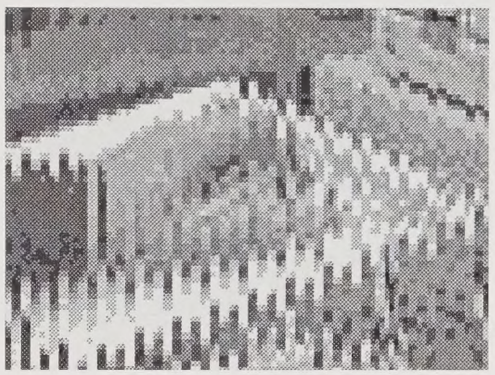
Much of the content of craft is a lavish expenditure of time. In some cases that may be the only thing of value that it communicates. I don't think that's very intelligent at this time in our history.

interactive, meaning that as you acted through the keyboard, the actual metal would respond and pose questions and give answers to you and so on, in real time, then that would dispel any qualms about process. However, what came to mind as I pondered this hypothesis was that this borders on simulation, that you are not actually working with the metal, but you have successfully simulated working with the metal on the screen. You have simulated physical labor but actually not engaged in it. Is not something lost when you have removed the "presence" of the material?

SL: I think you've confused two concepts when you talk about completely interactive and simulation. If it is truly interactive, by the definition you've given, and I think it's a good definition, then you're not simulating in any way. It is real. You are directly creating a real metal object or an object in real materials. That, by definition, is no longer simulation. Now, simulation is something that occurs interactively today in some CAD/CAM systems, in which on the monitor you see an object being created, manipulated and finally finished. It still resides in the memory of the computer, not as a real object that we can handle. I feel, with the computer, I have a level of freedom and safety that I would not have if the machine tool were linked in real time to what it was doing at the keyboard terminal. I would be violating the concept of simulation, putting at risk the real material, the real tool. Simulation is designed to avoid that.

MD: *I want to pursue this: Imagine a photograph of a tree. You believe it's a real tree because it looks right. That's a leap of faith. Now, that is different than actually being in the presence of a real tree. I think that although the computer heightens the intellectual aspect of any operation, it detracts from any tactile or intuitive or emotional knowledge that might be located somewhere outside of intellect, encouraged by physical labor and materiality.*

SL: What you're suggesting is that one of the ways that we learn to make art is through the experience we have with the materials we employ. That is true. As a



teacher of the craft, I know it is true. I know that when you put slides on the screen and ask students to compare techniques that might result in similar but not identical results, you trouble them, because they know the difference, having experienced it. They understand that there will never be identical realizations when approached from two technically different paths.

I grant that there is some merit to that position, but intellectually I have taken another step and that is the realization that all that we know about materials and process can be communicated through a master craft data bank, which will ultimately develop, and therefore the knowledge of the hand in contact with the material will probably no longer be necessary. Engineers have discovered this already. They have vast data banks that they plug into when they need to know about materials. And, getting back to the idea of simulation, they can simulate and find out very quickly through the use of the computer how the material is going to behave. Well, we can do the same thing. I don't think that direct contact with materials will have anything to do with the production of art.

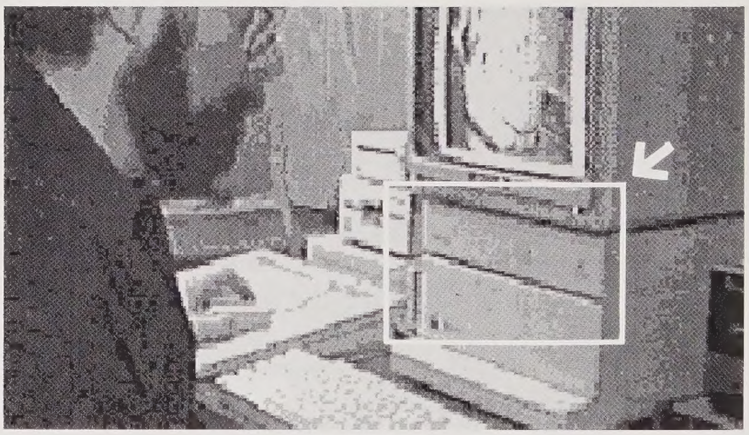
MD: *What you're saying about metalsmithing and engineering, does that apply to all artisan activities?*

SL: I quickly jump to the easel painter and am aware that the camera didn't put those people out of business. Now is the computer in a stronger position than the camera in that respect? I suspect not. I vacillate, because now suddenly comes to mind the entire field of computer graphics and what it can do. Will that put the painter out of business? I doubt it. I think we're culturally too committed to the idea of paint on canvas, much more than we are to the idea of hands making things. In all other ways we can utilize the computer to supplant paint on canvas.

MD: *You have said, "Iwould insist on having the physical manifestation of the idea in my collection rather than strictly the concept." You also say, "I value the idea, I value it highly. The object is the physical manifestation of the idea." On a practical basis, how does the idea change for you as it goes from your own conceptualization to its rendition on the computer screen until the actual production of the physical object through CAM on the other end? What changes in those steps?*

SL: The computer hasn't really made a great deal of difference in that process as yet, because the concept is always purer and more magical than the reality, and every step taken beyond the idea and moving closer to the reality is a step leading to disappointment. It's my hope that the computer will allow me to minimize that disappointment, that the steps from concept to realization will be smoother and more accurate than they are currently. The sketch or rendering of an idea is never really capable of communicating what I envision, and as I attempt to render it in materials there is an increasing dissatisfaction with my ability to communicate that original idea. This has always been a motivating force for me to go on to the next object. As I mentioned earlier, the computer now allows me at least to render more ideas in the same amount of time. Soon I'll be able to make more of those things in the same amount of time. The expectation is that I'll get closer and closer to that ideal. I can't be sure that will occur, but it's my expectation.

The computer is a virtual tool. That means it can be anything I want it to be, which means I will have, in effect, many more tools at my disposal. The computer will allow me to completely explore an idea, with the hope that I'll get much



closer to that idea. Things get in the way when you're making something. You go from this beautiful concept to having to find the right material and the right tool and the right time and make sure you don't screw up along the line, and then finally the thing is realized. But never do things go smoothly. It just doesn't quite come off. But you accept it. It's an acceptable approximation; you have to go on. But, assuming I have this fully integrated CAD/CAM system, I just push the button again and try it with another variation.

MD: *Does the notion of an aleatory effect come into play with CAD/CAM and how? I bring that up because much of creation and innovation has been based on aleatory stimuli and effects, a romantic epiphany, unexpected and unstructured. Is there such a thing with CAD/CAM?*

SL: I can envision programming that in, but then you would not accept it any longer as an aleatory effect, because it has already been planned, even though the artist may not expect the result. So, I'm ambivalent.

MD: *There was similar controversy about John Cage's work with the "prepared" piano, which he said was created in order to facilitate aleatory music. His critics said he had structured the aleatory effects.*

SL: Exactly, and that's what the program that I'm referring would do.

MD: *Cage countered that by saying that although the tool was prepared, the aleatory effect comes from the artist's use of the tool. The tool did not control the artist, or what the artist did with it was totally unpredictable. And he was only concerned with the artist's reaction not with the reaction of the machine or the piano. Is CAD/CAM for you as flexible? In its interactive nature does it reprimand you for aleatory use, or is that part of the presumption for using it?*

SL: That it would reprimand and then deny me that, no. It's not an inherent quality of the computer. It could be if one wished it to be. But you don't have to have that occur. In the simplest drawing programs on the computer, you'll find complete freedom to develop whatever you wish on the screen. However, there are drafting programs that will constrain you to produce a perfect radius and perfect circles and perfect squares if you so desire. You can have it either way. I can envision a program that would not allow me to exceed the tolerances of my machines and my cutters and my materials, etc. It would just preclude those accidents, those errors of judgment on the part of the designer. But I could also, just as easily, turn that off.

When we talked about the necessity to acquire the manual skills that have been so important to the knowledge of the craft down through the centuries, then I could envision a time when they would no longer need to be acquired, because the knowledge of the hand could be programmed into the computer, so that you would have that data base and anyone could utilize it. And when it became that accessible, nobody would think it particularly important. So a beginner, knowing nothing, could turn on all this artificial intelligence and create technically perfect pieces—dull, boring, repetitive, cliched perfection.

MD: *In our discussion of the handmade versus the machinemade, I wanted to clarify a point you made, that for the consumer of metalwork it made no difference whether a piece was machine—or handmade. And I assumed you meant because of the social history of metal forms manifest in forks or cups or jewelry. Is that what you meant, that the public really doesn't care?*

SL: My experience is that the public really doesn't care. It is the rare individual who really cares that much about the process.

MD: *Is that a condition to be rectified?*

SL: No, I don't think so. I don't think we have to educate people to know if a piece was done with a hammer and anvil or a press.

MD: *Because you think there is no intrinsic value to having something done by hand?*

SL: Not any longer for me. Now, this is a point that I know most of my colleagues will take issue with. They'll say you're missing the whole reason for the crafts' existence. But, as I said before, that is a 19th-century romantic attitude. I did subscribe to it for many years, and I can understand how what I've just said might seem to be really off the wall.

MD: *I think it's hard to defend the craft tradition, but I think that we as a civilization believe in the inherent humanity of the personal gesture manifest in individual action and consequently in individual making. Since you can communicate gesture in poetry, even though it is not physically perceptible, do you find metalsmithing with the use of CAD/CAM transcending its limitation of process and materials—transcending the poetry of the physical?*

SL: You can have it either way, depending on what you're looking for. If it is the mental thrust, then you can find it, whether the piece has been made spontaneously by hand or created through some other device. If what you're looking for is the mark of a hand-driven tool, then that's the only way you're going to find it, and I contend that at this point in our history, the mark of the hand-driven tool isn't all that important.

MD: *Because society doesn't conceive of it as important?*

SL: No, because I, as an artist, don't conceive of it as important.

MD: *But you accept that the physical gesture and the mental gesture can coexist? One does not preclude the other. You have just personally chosen the mental gesture as more valid for you at this point?*

SL: Yes, I think it's more in keeping with the society I'm living in. I'm living in an information age. That's what comes through to me on a regular basis and I respond to it.

MD: *In evaluating technology's credibility, let's make a short list of its assets and liabilties.*

SL: I think I've already enumerated the assets. Liabilities -I would say at this point, our lack of experience with it and its very, very short history. It's clear that all I envision can't be realized at this point. I can't go out and prove conclusively to all detractors or questioners that what I am propounding is capable of realization. But by analogy, and from what I see in industrial manifestations of these technologies, I'm

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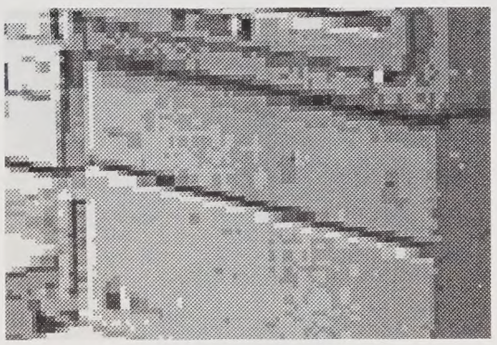
convinced that we will soon be able to realize the benefits of these technologies, and the liabilities that they bring with them at that point, I suggest, are far fewer than any other technology available to us today. Our technologies, up to the advent of the computer, have been clearly limited individually. The computer is so amorphous a machine and a technology that virtually any limitation that one can identify can be overcome, given the will and the commitment. And that's new.

MD: *Trying to sum up, it seems that you are saying that metalsmithing is somehow determined by the forms of its history, which is culturally determinant, and that the value to society and the culture is primarily in the finished product. The culture generally doesn't care how it's made as long as that finished product is acceptable. Therefore, we can go and find any method of production or creation in order to satisfy that need for a finished form, a finished product to satisfy culture's expectations. Where in that process is the need for cultural innovation and where does that innovation come from?*

SL: When you talk about innovation, I assume now that we're not talking about technology, we're talking about the ability to generate the unique esthetic object.

MD: *I mean the finished product that culture finds acceptable, that's what you described. The process is immaterial to the culture. But the culture is concerned with certain forms and certain finished products, which then give metalsmiths validity. Is there any room in that definition for innovation? And if there is, where does it come from?*

SL: I see that as an esthetic concern. Human beings seem to crave visual stimulation and visual satisfaction. Repetition is perceived with lack of interest. We've developed an esthetic language, whether it results in a search for kitsch or a search for higher artistic expression, it seems to pervade all cultures, and technology seems to be irrelevant to it. Regardless of what technologies are employed to create these serviceable objects, there continues to be a communal desire for this continued re-evaluation and I think it stems from this human condition. I'm not a philosopher in



that respect and I don't think I can explain that need more fully, but I think it is apparent that we have it.

MD: *What I'm asking is, does the technology of CAD/CAM enhance that need for innovation?*

SL: That's one of my fundamental precepts. By eliminating much of the labor, it allows for concentration on the innovative aspects of objectmaking. It allows the individual to continue to refine and change forms. If they're worthy, so much the better for all of us. If they're not, there will be a greater proliferation of trash, but that isn't the fault of the computer. It's the fault of the artist running it. But most definitely I project a future in which the creative individuals will be able to have a much greater effect on their society.

MD: *Obviously, CAD/CAM is a double-edged sword and CAD generally reflects back to the maker. It can be potentially an interactive process. But CAM, meaning the manufacturing process, is involved in reproduction and dissemination. In your scheme, is the manufacturing as important as the design, more important, equally important, and what role does it play?*

SL: It's as important. Without the CAM capability, what we would have is just a glorified sketchpad. And that might be nice, and, early on, I thought that might be enough. But I realize now that in order to justify my enthusiasm, the CAM capability must exist. Industrial-strength CAM suggests multitudes of widgets all identical, in a never-ending stream. And that's what so intrigues the investors in these large systems. I am subversive. I see it as a way of producing unique objects in an equally endless stream. That's not efficient economically, but it is efficient artistically. Once we eliminate the overwhelming physical investment, we open up the opportunity to continue to explore the permutations of an idea until we are totally finished with it. At this point I'm not able to do that.I have to accept one or two manifestations or something that approximates the vision that I had going into a project, because I don't have the time, the energy or the enthusiasm to continue. Our ideas tend to flow at a far more rapid rate than our ability to execute them. And when you are involved in the execution of an idea, it isn't long before the new ideas are forcing their way into your consciousness, with a pressure that precludes continuing with the old ideas. Therefore, the exploration that I'd like to see occur in my own work has never actually occurred. I have to move on because of that pressure. The CAM aspect of CAD/CAM I believe will allow the luxury of that continued exploration without denying the pressure to move on.

MD: *How soon do you think you can realize the full potential of CAD/CAM in metalsmithing?*

SL: When the objects I wish to create are being produced as rapidly as I wish them to be, in the number that I wish, of a quality that I'm satisfied with. Now, that doesn't answer your question, nor do I think I'll ever really be satisfied. I guess we could conclude by saying that I'll never realize it.

MD: *Then, the ultimate value of your research, whether it ends tomorrow or 10 years from now, will probably reside in the polemic.*

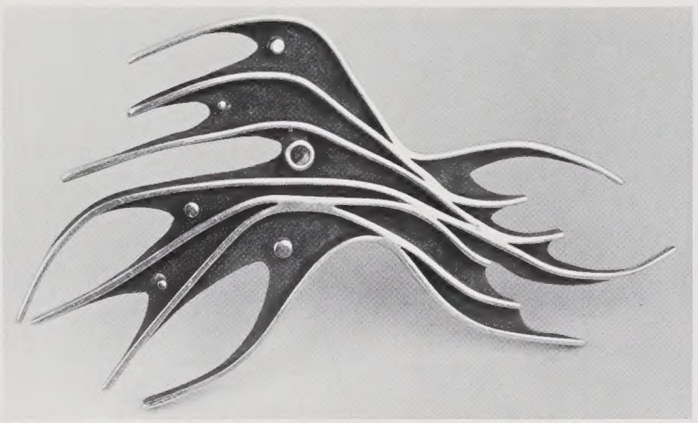
SL: Yes.

Stanley Lechtzin is a Professor and Chairman of the Crafts Department at Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, PA. Michael Dunas lectures and writes on craft, design and art.

Ed Wiener

9 *Pendant,* free molten sterling silver and coral beads, 4⅛ x 2⅛", c 1949

E D W I E N E R ' S A R T S A N D E N D S



Above left: 1 *Bracelet,* two views, handwrought sterling silver wire and sheet, 5/8 x 1 7/8", c 1948; **center: 2** *Brooch,* oxidized sterling silver, gold beads, copper tube, 3 1/2 x 2 1/2", c 1950; **right: 3** *Brooch,* cast 14k gold, striated texture, 2 5/8 x 2", c 1965-67

by Toni Lesser Wolf
Photographs by Stuart Friedman

Ed Wiener exemplifies the studio jewelry artist of the late 1940s and 50s. The first time we met, this fascinating 70-year-old man reminisced at length about the New York art/craft scene of 40 years ago. With a wry wit and an acute intellect, he interpreted an era, a philosophy, a movement, only now coming to be understood as the post-World War II American metalsmithing phenomenon, and expounded upon its unique connection to modern painting and sculpture. In reviewing my interviews with him for this article, I was impressed with how much I had learned about jewelry from looking through his eyes, and how much more fully I appreciated the innovations pioneered by the vanguards of this revolution.

His verbal approach to the pieces focused on design elements and/or concepts, while his visual approach in handling a bracelet, rotating it, placing it on my wrist pointed out how the air, enclosed by a simple curve of wire, gave the piece its impact. Further, his comparison of its relationship to the sculpture of Alexander Archipenko (*Figure 1A, 1B*) —how the *negative space* creates the "magic," allowed me to view modernist jewelry with a more clearly sharpened perception.

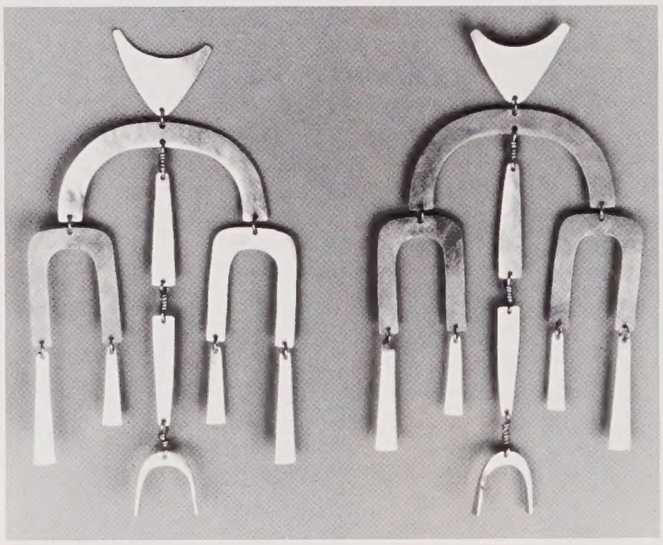
Because Wiener is currently preparing a retrospective exhibition, his position in the scheme of contemporary jewelry history was on his mind. What began 40 years ago as a means "of supporting himself and his family with dignity" developed into a varied technical and stylistic evolution—an intensely intellectual approach to the creation of jewelry with the methods available to him. He wished to exhaust a particular mode and move on, not overcraft a piece or combine too many images or techniques. A simple man, Wiener believed in reducing a design to its essentials, eliminating extraneous elements. He compared jewelry design to jazz improvisation, where chordal embellishments build up until they become more important than the harmony itself, after which the musician deletes, paring the passage down to the core—the most brilliant tonal statement being left—just as in exceptional visual design. He admired the integrity of jazz and how jazz musicians likes modernist jewelers found a technique to express their artistry.

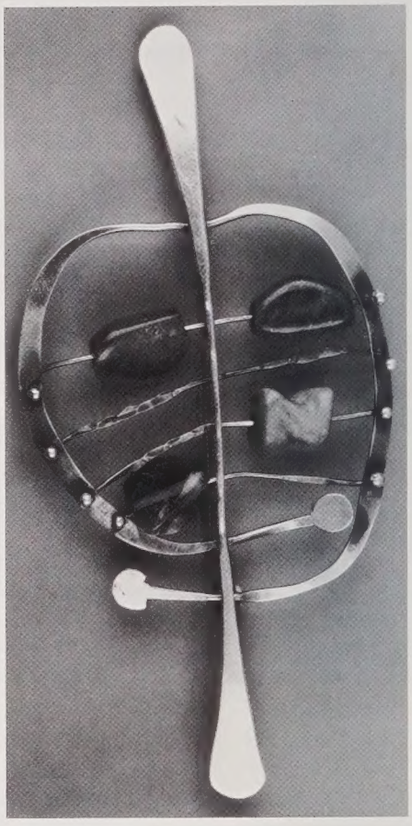
He believed, as did his contemporaries in 1946, in a noncompetitive alliance among artists—in a *new world,* where one shouldn't regress. The American studio jeweler was unfettered by tradition, unlike his European counterpart. He firmly believed that an artist must be involved in the basic problems of his time. He leaned towards nonobjectivism, but with subliminal clues, i.e., using nonrepresentational forms to *suggest* the recognizable: an ovoid might indicate a TV screen or a five-pointed star a person. Ultimately, a bird is not a bird but a "feeling-of-flight form."[1]

Like so many modernist studio jewelers, Wiener was essentially self-taught. Born in New York City in 1918, he worked in his father's butcher shop until the war. During WW II, while working on a radio assembly line, he realized he had an aptitude for manual skills.

And after the war, in 1945, although he had no real interest or background in jewelry or art, he took a general craft course at Columbia University, as he puts it, in order to accompany a friend who was getting her masters degree in art education uptown on the subway. The craft class lasted for three months with only four sets of tools for 50 students. The kitchen stove, where he worked with his wife, Doris, became his first studio. There the Wieners fashioned pins with their friends' names and initials from twisted wire. They were instantly successful and the proceeds from their sale paid for tools. Wiener states, "[It was a] wonderful way to digress from a rather drab world of simply earning and trying to find expression."[2]

Married in 1944, Ed and Doris Wiener went to Provincetown for the first time July 4th weekend of that year. They instantly fell in love with "this brilliant little gem of a town on the perimeter of Provincetown Harbor . . ."[3] The picturesque qualities of this beach community surface, continuously, in his imagery: sea urchins (*Figure 2*), decaying driftwood (*Figure 3*), and "big fish eating little fish" (*Figure 4*). Wiener feels a psychic connection with natural forms and desires to express nature's ambiguity, e.g., the fact that the sun, sand and water can maintain as well





Above left: 4 *Big Fish Eating Little Fish* earrings, handwrought and hammered 18k gold, rattail connections, 3¼ x 2½", 1986-87; **center: 5** *The Square Spiral* brooch, handwrought sterling silver wire, 2¾ x 2½", c 1946; **right 6** *Abacus* brooch, handwrought sterling silver, amethyst, quartz, turquoise, carnelian, lapis, 3¼ x ¼", c 1947

as corrode, material. Furthermore, natural forms are elegant and elegance is one of the things jewelry should be about.[4] Attracted also by the artists' colony and exotic bohemian atmosphere, they decided to return every year.

They opened their first store in the center of Provincetown during the summer of 1946, in a space they shared with sandal-maker Roger Rilleau. There the Wieners sold Mexican jewlery (which was not so popular then), as well as Mexican bags and belts, along with their own creations. Working 14 hours a day, seven days a week, they lived a primitive existence, taking the afternoon off to bathe in Wellfleet Pond, as they didn't have a tub. Wiener learned a great deal from the artists who frequented his shop: Harry Engel, Adolph Gottlieb, Barnett Newman, Peter Grippe, Chaim Gross, Hans Hoffman and Ward Bennett, all of whom, he notes, were ". . . willing to suspend a certain amount of taste to help a struggling young artist."[5] They made him feel as if he was doing something significant. There were very few standards in contemporary jewelry at that time by which to judge, the prevailing *modern* style being Danish *modern,* exemplified by Georg Jensen.

Feeling that jewelry should be a contemporary expression, he first looked to Picasso for inspiration. Picasso's sculptural forms, especially, were very readily translatable into jewelry, especially silver, which was used primarily because of its impermeability. "[Silver] is a noble metal . . . "It'll be beautiful in spite of most things you can do to it,"[6] Wiener later remarked. The logical conclusion of his love of silver was to use a lot of it, so the early pieces tend to be heavy, incorporating tool marks and, thereby, the idea of process, into the design. (*Figures 5, 6, 7*). He admired Calder's disregard for prevailing jewelrymaking conventions, for example, in creating earrings that were too long—mobiles, really, with the ends left unfinished, just hammered a little, and the surface dull instead of shiny, planished instead of smooth. This helped him break out of the two-dimensionality of his Picassoesque period. Wiener was inspired by Calder's rhymatic expansion of round wires by the occasional flattening of a section and, consequently, achieving disturbance of the uniform parallel quality (*Figure 5*) and by the primitive technique of twisting wire to form connections rather than soldering (*Figure 7*).

In the summer of 1947, the Wieners opened their own shop in the western part of Provincetown, across from the Advocate Building, where they also sold painting and sculpture by other artists, and they occupied this gallery every summer until 1965.

Upon their return to New York in the fall of 1946, the Wieners rented a studio on Second Avenue and 2nd Street, in what is now the East Village. In the winter of 1947, Wiener opened his first retail store on 55th Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, in the ground floor of a brownstone, several steps below street level. Architect Dick Stein designed a tight, "*Mondrianish*" space. The store, called "Arts and Ends" (with "Ed Wiener" printed below in small letters to avoid confusion with another jeweler Edward Weiner, who had already registered his business in that name), remained at that location until 1953. Wiener attributes the prevailing interest in post WW II studio jewelry and his clientele, made up, mostly, of artists, art teachers and art collectors, to the landmark modern jewelry exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1946, because it was dominated by contemporary sculptors. It caused handcrafted jewelry to rise above the realm of occupational therapy.

Further encouragement to explore the creative possibilities of contemporary jewelry came from his friendship with Sam Kramer and his respect for Kramer's inspirational manipulation of gauge and volume (he had purchased a pair of earrings from Kramer for Doris in 1938 for $2.50).

Wiener's own formal vocabulary was most influenced by Calder's use of spirals (*Figures 5, 8*), ovoids and inverted Cs (*Figures 9, 10, 4*), and the manner in which the forms *floated,* relating to one another (*Figures 11, 4*). These shapes and configurations span Wiener's entire career. Following the wire calligraphy in space, his design repertoire began to include expressions of volume through oxidation, enclosing walls and low-negative forms (*Figures 12, 1A & B, 2*). He explored linearity and volume simultaneously from 1946 until about 1953, cross-fertilizing each other and breeding new forms and reconciliations. Wiener constantly set up a

Above left: 7 *Bracelet,* handwrought sterling silver wire, tumbled turquoise beads, 5½ x 2¾", c 1946; **center: 8** *Spiral* brooch, handwrought 18k gold, planished, 2⅝ x 2¼", d1986-87; **right: 10** Necklace, cast 18k gold, granulated surface texture, 19" l., c 1975

"problem-solving" situation with an intellectual solution, feeling that he was more influenced by painting, but, at the same time, caught up in the three-dimensional context necessitated by the jewelry object's function within the body's space frame.

Wiener's concern with movement led to his playful "abacus" pieces *(Figure 6),* where beads would move freely on suspended wires of varied lengths and, sometimes, gauges. But there would, ultimately, be a spot where the bead would be caught, not allowed to move completely freely, which revealed the ever-present imposition of a formal solution, a *controlled haphazardness.*

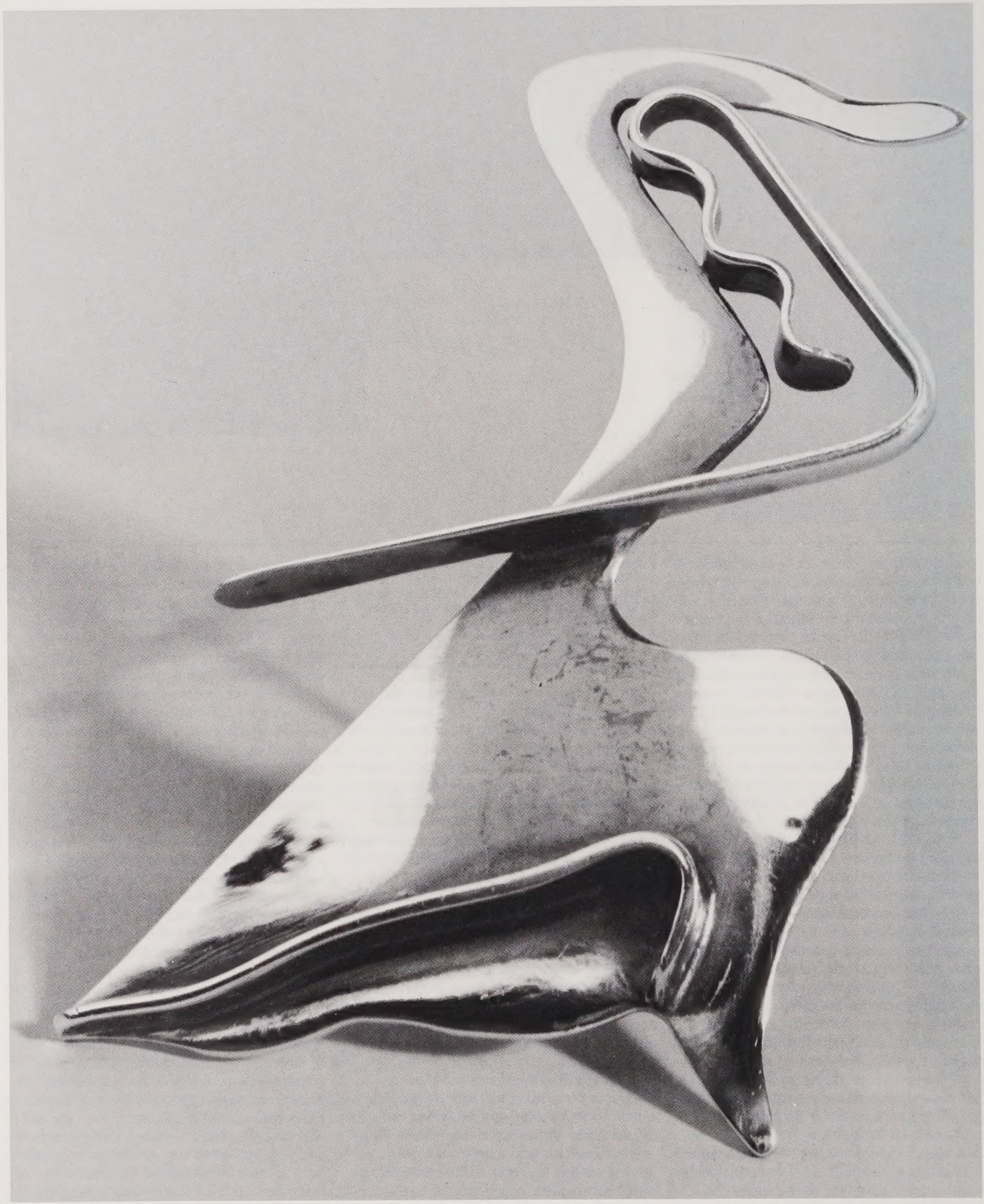
From 1953 until 1966, "Arts and Ends" occupied a store at 46 West 53rd Street, a "high-traffic street" near the Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Contemporary Crafts. A second store was located in Greenwich Village until 1958. The earliest wrought expressions eventually acceded to what Wiener terms the "ultimate sculptural context" *(Figure 13),* which he admits he resisted for a long time. Jewelry has two essential functions, according to Wiener, to adorn and to modify the human figure.[7] His strong beliefs about the role of scale in jewelry and its relationship to the human form have kept him away from making purely sculptural work. While sculpture exists only for itself and is suspended in its own space, jewelry needs a person's anatomy to find its resolution: ". . . all designs shall lie in the human scale and shall express the wearer," Wiener states. "There is a constant need to test against the human figure; I reject a design in jewelry that I feel is purely sculptured."[8] Also, jewelry must be handsome, he believes. It is often worn as a cultural badge of rebellion, to visually associate oneself with contemporary art.[9]

An icongraphic motif runs throughout all of his periods, often obvious in ethnographic or figural associations, sometimes alluding to the beach, sometimes to primitive and/or tribal *(Figure 9).* These images were achieved in both wrought and cast techniques, the latter being explored fully from about 1949 on.

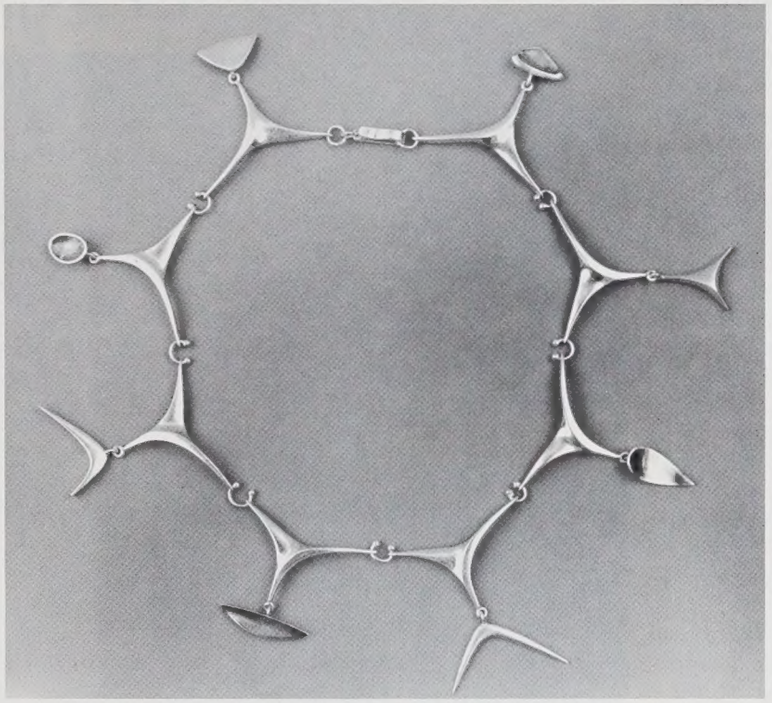
Metal's ability to reflect light and thereby define a piece through its silhouette is a key point in understanding Ed Wiener's vision. Texture intensifies the formal definition through its lessened reflective properties. The transitional pieces—*accretions* or combinations of random forms *(Figure 3)* display deep texture and foretell the important diverse direction Wiener would be taking in the 1970s.

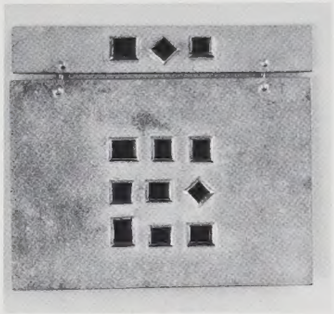
Wiener's next move was to Madison Avenue at 69th Street in 1966. By now his textural applications were becoming more subtle. A visit to the stone room at the Cluny Museum in Paris and a trip to the gem-cutting centers in Jaipur, India excited him and extended his imagination as to the use of stones mounted in gold. He became enthralled with Byzantine jewelry with its connecting link between Europe and Asia, a compromise between West and East.

Use of stones, which he bezel-set, as did the ancients, further offered him a means to connect with the pre-Renaissance past. He began to favor high caret gold for its predictability, although he gave it a dull finish. Rings were his favorite types of jewelry because of the amuletic connotations and symbolic properties of power and/or high social status *(Figure 11).* He has made five times as many rings throughout his career than any other jewelry object. Some stones have magical meanings, such as abstract powers to avert disease or bring good fortune. As he notes, ". . . people have this external vision of themselves that somehow, some object in nature or something can fill up their own lives; a power that they lack in themselves. And that it can fulfill them far beyond ownership and its fashion meaning. . . ."[10] Although Wiener is not a religious man, he makes primeval spiritual associations in his jewelry. "I seem constantly to dredge up older and less articulate cognitions of gold like sunlight, and gems like water and fire and all are full of magical and symbolic energies".[11] He employs what exists between the material and the maker to achieve a deep view of what exists inside himself through images he digests from his environment.[12] Unlike his early wrought-silver pieces, which explored both positive and negative forms—mass and void—jewels from the textural periods derive their form from the *surprise* configurations created by the stones, the color of the gold and the texture. *Deliberate randomness* in the arrangement of the stones *(Figures 11, 14)* calls to



12 *Martha* brooch, after a contemporary photo of dancer Martha Graham taken by Barbara Morgan, handwrought and oxidized sterling silver wire and sheet, 3½ x 2", c 1948





Above left: 11 *Ring,* cast 18k gold and turquoise, 1 1/16 x 13/16", c 1973; **center: 13** *Necklace,* cast sterling silver, 17 1/2" l., c 1959; **right: 14** *Brooch,* 14k gold, etched wax texture, square rubies, 2 1/8 x 1/4", c 1980

mind similar tense combinations in metal and vacous shapes from earlier periods.

From 1971 to 81, Wiener maintained a shop at 57th Street and Madison Avenue. During this period, he was heavily involved with textural effects on gold. However, the texture became subtle, volume was achieved through surface *(Figure 14).*

Ed Weiner is now immersed in what he terms "The Great Reprise." One sees in his newest output from 1986 to 87 an artist looking both backward and forward. Original forms reappear with more spectacular dimensions *(Figures 4, 8).* The spiral—immutable, infallible, has coiled for Wiener for 40 years and gives no indication of ceasing *(Figure 8),* and the primal symbols of sea life reemerge with a new textural surface *(Figure 4).*

Images from mankind's "collective unconscious" (Carl Jung, *Man and His Symbols*) have been drawn with metal by Ed Wiener, in most techniques available to the contemporary metalsmith, and now are reappearing to be refined. And this is Ed Wiener's contribution: Sam Kramer, Paul Lobel and Margaret de Patta were well established by the time he came on the scene in 1946, but no other jeweler of that generation explored so many different approaches so successfully. He has a brilliant sense for shape, surface and volume. The pieces are subtle, often disarmingly simple. They must be touched, turned, worn.

Ed Wiener was not competitive. He was not in the craft mainstream. He only wanted to make the best pieces of jewelry he could. He was surprised by his success and only recently is able to evaluate this significance objectively. "Jewelry," he says, is a "gift of love." And if a piece is made to be such and is given in that context, it is cherished. To Ed Wiener, this is what jewelry is all about: the magic, the mystery, the spirit, the energy and the *change.* Through each period and style in which he worked, he always strove to be a jeweler for the current time. He found inspiration in sources as diverse as modern painting and sculpture, nature and primitive symbols and ancient techniques. "In the end," he says, "we never really broke from tradition."[13] He has been a modernist, a retro-modernist and a post-modernist. I look forward to what he will do next.

Notes

1. From an interview with Dorothy Seckler for the Archives of American Art, Sept. 5, 1962, Provincetown, MA. 2.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. "Arts and Ends," *Craft Horizons,* Spring 1950, vol 10, no 1, p 23.
8. Whitaker, Irwin and Wiener, Ed, "Jurying on Trial," *Craft Horizons,* Sept/Oct, 1957, vol XII, no 5, p 33.
9. Idem, Seckler.
10. Ibid.
11. Nordness, Lee, *Objects U.S.A.,* New York: Viking Press, 1970, p 209.
12. Idem, Seckler.
13. From an interview with the author, July 28, 1987, New York.

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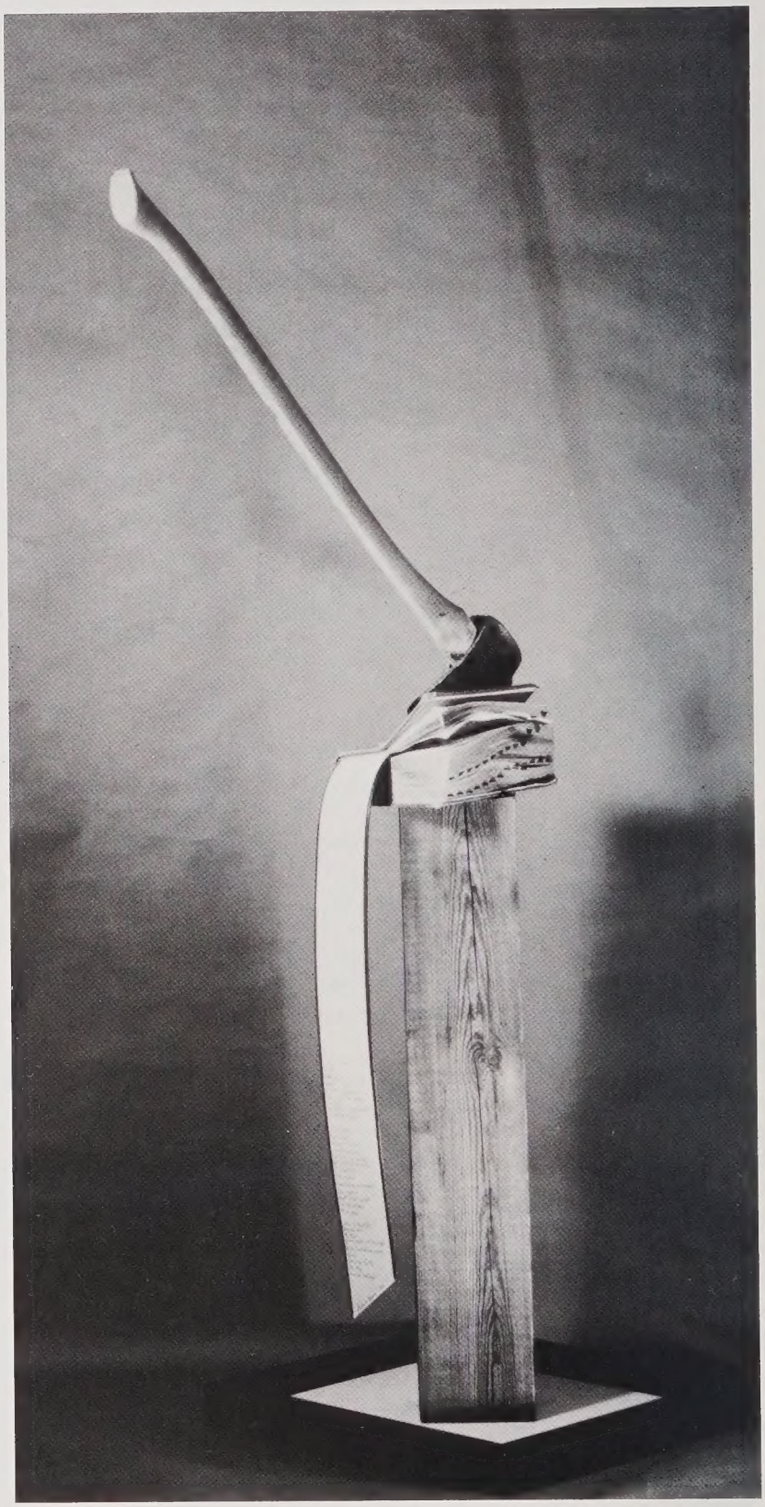
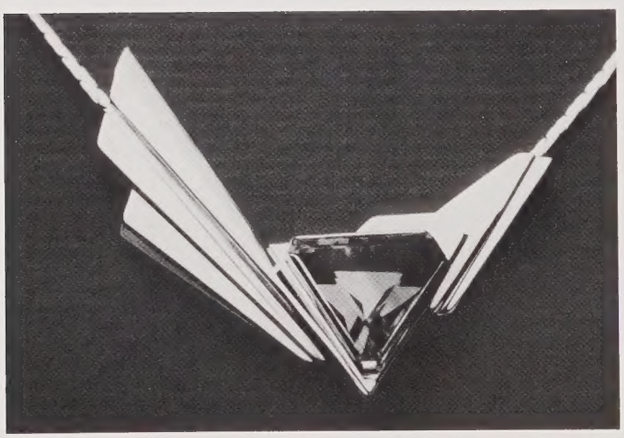
Toni Lesser Wolf is a jewelry historian, lecturer, curator and writer living in New York City.

Ed Wiener will be the subject of a retrospective exhibit at Fifty/50 Gallery in New York to be held in early 1989.

DYSLEXIA



TOOL OR TRIAL?



Above: *Teacher, Teacher* sculpture, wood, steel, leather paper, 4'10" h., 1983. Photo: Michael Hager. A poem, also by Richard Devine, on his frustrations with many teachers' lack of understanding of the problems of dyslexia is incorporated into the book-marker running through the dictionary; **Left:** *Flight* pendant, 14k gold, ametrine, cast and fabricated, 1¾ x 2 x ⅜". Photo: Jamie Stillings

by Richard and Barbra Devine

I have long suspected that I have a great deal of "dyslexic" company in the arts. As more and more networks, such as the Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities emerge, which focus on an increased awareness of learning differences, I see that I was correct in my assumption.

I have been sharing my experiences with children, educators and parents over the past 10 years through the arts and am thrilled that the time has come for a new opportunity—a network with my colleagues. There are those who will relate readily with my particular struggle with dyslexia and others who will say, "Well, this doesn't relate to my experience." But some might wonder whether more of us might be dyslexic than realize. And, after all, isn't it now common knowledge that we're all using only a small part of our brain capacity?

The arts have taught me to go beyond survival to a reliance on myself. Tapping into creative energy has taken me from struggle into the realization of my dreams; dyslexia is no longer a trial, but a tremendously useful tool.

The Early Days of Fear

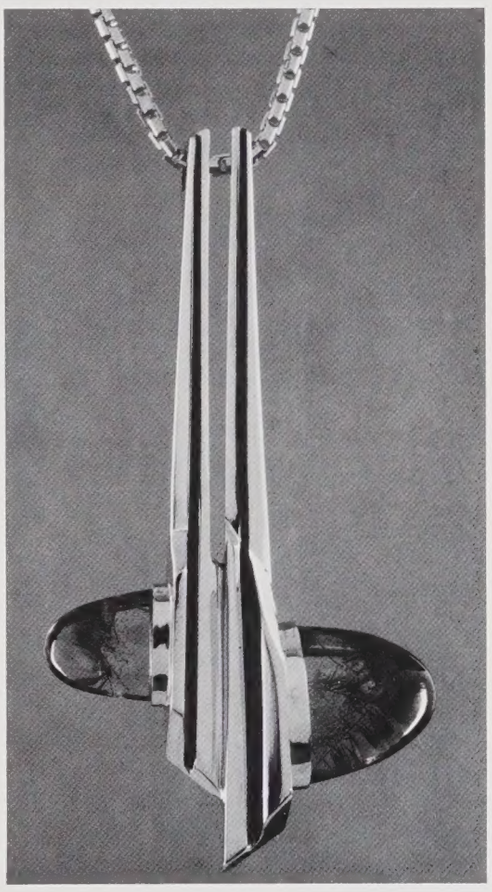
Until I was five years old, my mother was the only person who could understand what I was trying to say. I was diagnosed with speech problems at age four. Even with special tutoring, my speech remained incomprehensible at times through most of my school life.

Emotional problems mounted a few years later when I acquired the label "severe dyslexic." Despite the help of many nationally recognized tutors and specialists, my struggles continued. Placed with "slow learners," I recall my boredom with classes, how I was expelled from school at age eight for drilling a hole in my chair—a basic skill I use in my work today!

A turning point came when I was 11 because of a special history teacher. She suggested that I build a model of a shrine at Ilse, Japan instead of writing a term paper on Japan. This alternative gave me a glimpse of excitement in learning. Communicating with my hands came easily as did seeing three-dimensionally.

With the advent of adolescence came epileptic seizures, which somehow seemed to me "no big deal" compared to my dyslexia, although my medication never did control them. My physician stressed the dangers in operating power tools. How could I close the door which had just cracked open? I continued in woodworking.

As school went on with the emphasis on reading and writing as keys to success, I felt less and less able to survive. My early teens were troubled; I saw my only alternative as drugs and the streets. What kept me going were the woodworking classes where I easily designed and produced furniture.



Top: *Model of a Japanese Shrine at Ilse,* Japan (made by Richard Devine at age 11), 22 x 19 x 21"; **above:** *Tunnels* pendant, 14k gold, cocoxtynite amethysts, cast and fabricated, 2¼ x ¾". Photos: Michael Hager

Survival in My Troubled Teens

Another source of encouragement was Susan and Bill, my sister and brother-in-law, who lived in California where various therapies were emerging. I spent a summer there and they introduced me to psychodrama, which allowed me to "act out" some of my anger and frustration. This experience also helped me gain some perspective on my problems; hearing others (many were teachers!) share their problems made mine seem much smaller. I began to realize that there were other ways to learn besides reading and writing. It was Bill's encouragement to try jewelry making that prompted me to take my first course. Aware that my high school offered no jewelry classes, I knew I would have to find some alternatives.

I returned to Rochester with enough confidence to approach my guidance counselor and principal with a self-imposed curriculum (learning outside of books with audio tapes, oral communication and artistic projects.) This was rejected, so I went on to the head of the school board who understood. He recognized the potential of alternative learning and approved my program.

Independently, I took an evening college-level class in jewelry at the School for American Craftsman, Rochester Institute of Technology. Later, woodworking, ceramics and metalworking became areas of interest. At last, I was in classes where I excelled and had the respect of other students who came to me for help with their pieces—a great boost to my self-confidence. Sharing this with my school principle, I encouraged him to start a jewelry class in my high school. He responded with money for tools and provided an after-school time for me to teach interested students. My excitement in jewelry making grew and the joy I felt in doing something well pushed me to constant work. Suddenly, my peers no longer fit. They couldn't believe I preferred working to partying.

Finding a Role Model

I was fortunate to find a role model at 16 through a jewelry class offered at my local art gallery, taught by goldsmith Barry Merritt. He was a key person, a successful artist who also happened to be dyslexic. In exchange for help in building his studio, Barry assisted me when I encountered problems with my jewelry pieces. Understanding dyslexia from his own experience, he offered me support and encouragement.

By the time I graduated at 17 (skipping one-and-a-half years of high school), I had set up my own studio and was actively making and selling both constructed and cast jewelry. Some of my best customers were the teachers I approached in the school lounge the day after pay day.

Around this time, a local gallery asked me to teach a class on jewelry making. Teaching (without books, of course) came quite naturally. I was often instructing people my parents' age.

Moving Beyond Survival

It was Barry Merritt who told me about Haystack Mountain School of Crafts and I ventured off at 19 to spend the summer there. I was quite comfortable with this school environment where reading and writing were not crucial to succeeding. I could finally concentrate on my strengths in working with my hands. Being in a learning situation with others who seemed to share similar learning styles was quite a switch from being set aside as a "slow learner." A much greater acceptance of self evolved during this period. I finally realized that I really could think, that probably I could even write well; I just simply couldn't do the mechanics of reading and writing, the tools that worked for the majority. And I gave myself permission to perhaps never read or write.

Over the next few years, my jewelry clientele was expanding, I began doing custom pieces for show and commissions and I exhibited through crafts shows around the country.

Learning About the Advantages of Dyslexics

Another key figure who appeared that year was Dr. Bill Kehoe, a dyslexic specialist who was training teachers and other professionals about special ways to motivate dyslexic students. Because of Dr. Bill's nonjudgmental manner, I allowed him to test me. As our friendship grew, I found myself in a unique situation—Dr. Bill was able to combine his understanding of me as a person with his professional insights into dyslexia. He persuaded me to try further testing so that he could get a more in-depth look at my strengths and weaknesses. He used a Wide Range Achievement Test to compare my recognition of individual words to the rest of the population and a Speeded Word and Picture Identification to assess my ability to handle visual perceptual problems. His explanation of the results gave me greater insight into my form of dyslexia. Although I had great difficulty in recognizing individual words, I had outstanding recall visually.

I felt a great deal of reinforcement for my learning style based on Dr. Bill's insights. He told me that I was part of the 15% of the population who have right brain dominance (the intuitive, relational, time-free mode) and that the remaining 85% tended to lead with their left hemisphere (the analytical, sequential, linear mode). This would call for a different way for me to process information. The direction of working with my hands continued to feel right, and I had a greater understanding of the need to explore ways of using and developing my strong visual and audio memories and the ability to see things three-dimensionally.

Dr. Bill reflected my feeling that the school system was inadequate for dyslexics and that the direction I was taking within the arts was probably a positive one for me. My confidence grew as I learned of the many famous people, such as Einstein, Da Vinci and Edison, who overcame their dyslexia to go on to make major contributions in their work.

Top: Gary Goslee, *Fish* sculpture (made at age 15), steel, 14" h.; **above:** Todd Summers, *Owl* sculpture (made at age 16), steel, 10½" h.
Photos: Peter Steiner

Dr. Bill invited me to speak at his classes for teachers dealing with learning difficulties. Later, I spoke at the Orton Dyslexia Society and was asked to be a member of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. Often, the reactions to my talks were from teachers who felt I was gifted but saw their children with learning problems unable to accomplish what I did. I strongly disagreed with this.

Sharing the Joy of Learning

Through Dr. Kehoe, I came to know the Norman Howard School, a private school for dyslexics in Rochester. Its director, Betsy McIsaac, and I often brainstormed about the importance of teaching dyslexics through the arts. (I suspected that many, if not a majority of dyslexics, had talents which could be developed like mine through arts projects in which the right brain's dominance could be an advantage.)We began searching for funding to design an arts program and were fortunate to receive a major grant from the National Committee, Arts for the Handicapped in 1980.

My idea for this Art Option program was to remove the students from the classroom where they usually experienced frustration in learning. I placed each student either one-on-one or one craftsperson to two or three students right in the artist's studio. The student attended a session of three-and-one-half hours, once per week for a period of six weeks. Included were woodworking, painting, weaving, pottery, video, stained and blown glass, music, sculpture, photography, metal sculpture and jewelry. Basically, the students were given a list of options and then I found the artists needed to teach; in this way the decision would be the student's, the idea being to enhance self-confidence and promote a sense of independence.

Although each artist approached teaching differently, essentially, it was a hands-on approach with a demonstration by the artist followed by the students making a finished piece or pieces of their own during the six-week session.

While no research study has been done on the Arts Option program, the actual pieces produced by the students, as well as feedback from the artists, parents, the regular school staff and the students themselves leads me to believe that the program has been a success. Consistently the students have won awards in the Scholastic Art Competition and two of them (out of a school of 40 students) went on to the national competition level, winning top gold awards. It is interesting to note that they are competing with students who study art in public schools an average of 148 classes per year!

The artists teaching in the Arts Option seem impressed by the talent, aptitude and enthusiasm demonstrated by the students in each of the media. Many of the kids have an attention span of 10 minutes in the classroom and yet work straight through a three-and-one-half hour session opting for no breaks. But most important is the excitement and joy in learning they expressed.

Phil and Noel's Success

Occasionally, through private arrangements with parents, I've offered to teach beyond the Norman Howard School Art Option a student showing potential and motivation. Phil was such an example—a youth-at-risk caught up in the juvenile justice system who continued his work off and on with me for four years, even though he dropped out of school and began to get in trouble with the law.

At one point, I helped Phil's parents design a program, approved by the judge, to allow me to teach him jewelry making 12 hours a week in my studio. Phil is a good example of a young person with learning differences for whom the creative process can open new ways for positive communication. In Phil's own words: "At first, I thought jewelry making was for girls and I almost didn't sign up for it. Before jewelry, I had nothing else, no interest in anything. It was the first thing I felt I could do."

And Phil's thoughts about the studio atmosphere were: "I really tried so hard in school but couldn't get anywhere; making jewelry came easy to me. I was in an informal place where I could be creative." Phil has a gift for precision and likes to perfect each piece of jewelry. Today, he is setting up his own studio, applying to craft shows and says he hopes to go on and make a living as a jeweler.

Noel, who has a severe form of dyslexia, made a rather complex design his very first session with me and it amazed me how quickly he learned basic skills. After his first day at jewelry making, he approached the school's director about the possibility of continuing beyond the Arts Option program.

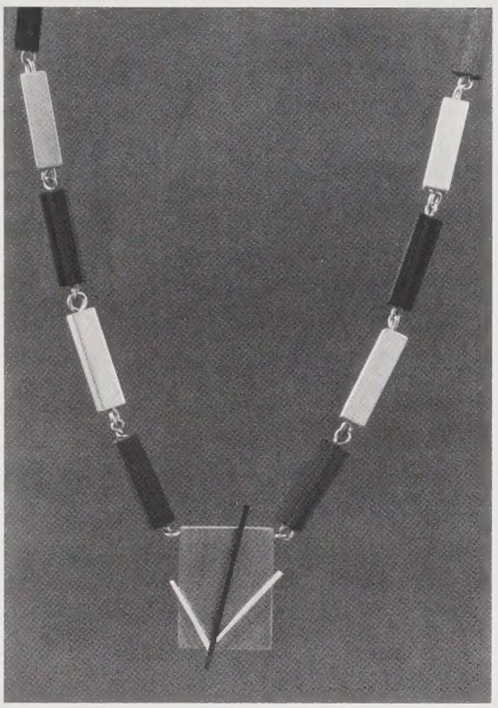
About a month later, on a tour of a local jewelry manufacturer with another group of jewelry students I began to realize the wide range of skills these students could learn here. I arranged to show my students' finished pieces to the owner, who told me that he was amazed at the workmanship. He confided that he, too, had experienced learning challenges as a kid and would be happy to help. There was one full-time opening for a buffer and he wondered if any of the students might be interested. Phil was interviewed and hired that week. Later, with the need for another buffer, Noel was hired.

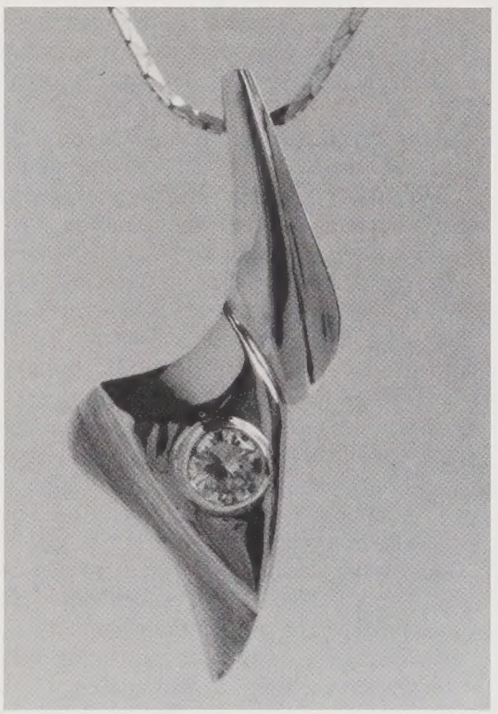
Phil worked there for about eight months and then decided he wanted to establish his own studio. Noel has been employed for about one year. The owner's response to hiring Phil and Noel: "I really didn't know what to expect. My first worry was whether or not they could handle the reading and number matching we use. As it turns out, there was no problem. Noel is probably the most accurate person I've had and we're fussy."

And his job evaluation of Phil and Noel: "I can't stress how good Noel has been. He's one of the finest I've ever had, one of our best employees. Phil was very good and will be a very good jeweler. I'm disappointed he didn't stick it out a bit longer."

Noel has arranged a schedule of half-days at school and afternoons at work. Noel's thoughts about being employed: "I didn't know if I'd fit in and be able to work to their standard, but after a few months, I knew they liked me because they told me I was doing a good job. They told me I could have a job after I finish school. I'm really bored with school and can't wait until I'm working all the time. I think I'll be happy working on their pieces; I don't know if I'll do my own jewelry or not."

It is interesting to me that Phil and Noel were two of the Norman Howard School's most challenging students. From Director Betsy McIsaac: "The Arts Option is the single most significant program that enhances self-esteem. Most kids need to reach that point before we can go about the process of remediating. It's an eminently successful program. I'm so pleased that Phil and Noel are doing well. I don't know if Noel would have ever found such a good potential career if it weren't for Arts Option."





Top: Noel Battey, *Necklace* (made at age 17), aluminum, silver, rosewood, ivory, chain 18" l.; **above:** Dina Guenther, *Pendant* (made at age 15), 14k gold, diamond, cast, 1½ x ⅞ x ⅛". Photos: Michael Hager

Communicating through Strengths

We live in a society which communicates mainly through reading and writing. I don't feel that I have a special talent but rather that the jewelry I create is just my best way of communicating. Dyslexia, once my greatest challenge, the trial of my early years, just doesn't hold the fear it once did. The difference is in my attitude; now I see it as a distinct advantage. My right brain dominance, now perceived as a tool, assists me greatly in jewelry design. I am able to design and create jewelry, although I have never read a book on jewelry making.

My learning challenges pushed me early on to rely on myself, to trust the experiential rather than the written word (what I call "frozen thoughts"). I examined my strengths and weaknesses in my teens and early on learned to accept myself as I was, not for what I thought I should be.

The major motivation for creating the Arts Option was to share the joy I found in learning through creativity. I wanted to show that learning can be fun once you find the tools that work for you.

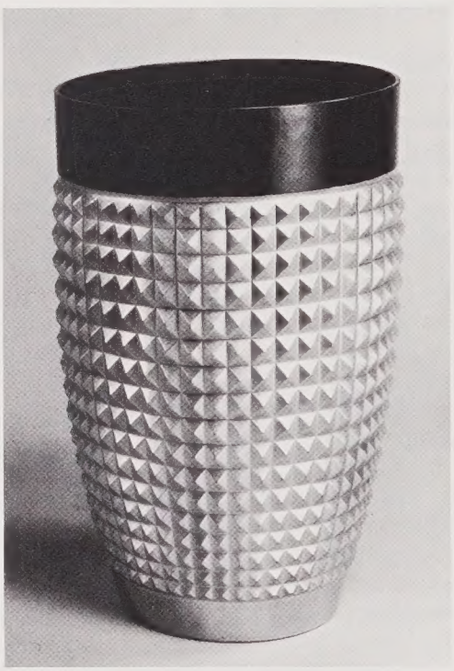
Teaching has certainly encouraged my own growth. Above all, it has increased my awe and respect for the uniqueness of each individual. I may always struggle with reading and writing but not with learning, now that I have found my tools.

Richard Devine has been a full-time designer in the Rochester area for the past 18 years, maintaining his own studio while exhibiting around the country. His wife, Barbra, joined him in partnership five years ago and they formed Devine Gold, specializing in 14k and 18k custom jewelry. Over the past few years, they have been developing a geometric, classic line of pendants, rings, brooches and earrings, incorporating both precious and semi-precious gems. Richard was selected from the Society of North American Goldsmith's Competition as a "New Designer" for the Jewelers of America International Trade Show in New York City in July of 1987.

Richard and Barbra's partnership has extended into speaking and writing about dyslexia. They continue to share their experience with children, parents and educators around the country. Richard presented a version of this article at the 1988 Society of North American Goldsmith's Conference at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York.

ARTISTIC RESEARCH INTO SPIRITUAL EXPRESSION

by Hiroko Sato Pijanowski



Shiro Sekiya, *Shakudo Gin Jumonji Kabin Flower vase, shakudo and silver, raised and chased, gold gilded over silver,* 9½" h. x 6⅜" c., 1975

Ikkoki Kashima, *Song of Autumn* water container, silver and copper with 24k green gold and lead foil damascene; lid—wood with silver handle, 6 x 4½", 1978

In 1983 a colleague casually referred to me as "Miss Mokume." I felt both complimented for having reintroduced a traditional technique to the world and also sharply criticized that my work was nothing more than a technical achivement.

"Creativity involves the construction of mental metaphors. By making one word, image or idea take the idenity of another, you can force it to take on new meaning that may be original and valuable."

—Edward DeBono, *New Think*

Creativity is problem-solving, a skill based on the conscious and/or unconscious recombination and juxtaposition of information derived from diverse sources and influences. This requires a synthesis of intellect and emotion, establishing relationships between the worlds of imagination, thought and physical objective reality.

To achieve this synthesis, the artist engages in two types of research. The first is the exploration of materials and technique, which corresponds to empirical research in the sciences. The second is related to the development of concept and content. To accomplish this, the artist undertakes the study of his or her world, receptive to all manner of stimuli, both external and internal, concrete and emotional. The information is absorbed, then consciously and intuitively reinterpreted in a manner that may reveal some personal or universal truth.

One of the reasons that artists are rarely thought of as engaging in research is that the public sees only the finished work, the result of the art process. The process itself remains invisible, and in fact, aside from the technical part of the process, almost inconceivable. The creative process cannot be quantified and is very difficult to explain through the use of language because of its intuitive nature.

The evolution of my current approach may help to illustrate this process, this kind of intangible research, which includes the search for, and incorporation of, diverse sources and influences. According to Bruce Metcalf's "Techniques for the Head" (*Metalsmith,* Winter, 1983):

"All artists use sources and influences and inspirations, and all art is in some way derived from something else. If a work of art was totally and completely original, it would be totally and completely incomprehensible to everyone but the artist himself. Complete originality would be so far removed from our normal experience that it would probably be construed as madness."

He goes on to say that "the range of art includes everything. Everything that you can perceive or imagine is available to the artist (as a source) . . . his only limits are self-imposed." That artists rely on sources and influences does not mean that they cannot create something new. On the contrary, the role of the artist is to absorb all of this information and, through a sometimes subconscious process of abstraction, recombination and/or juxtaposition, to produce some new insight or truth.

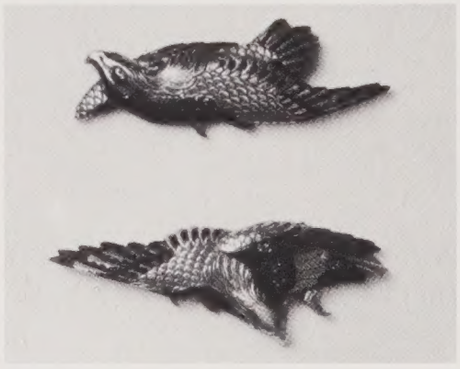
I adapted Metcalf's ideas to my approach. I went back to the beginning, to re-examine my early work. I started a collection of "Influences and Sources" by going to all kinds of exhibitions, reading widely, listening to music, going to fashion shows. I took notes, collected clippings from magazines, took photographs, even occasionally took notes while watching television. I studied the history of metalsmithing, reviewing the changes in my field and the historical contexts in which they occurred. Through my observations, analysis and criticism, I started to understand what was important to me in my work. In 1983 a colleague casually referred to me as "Miss Mokume." I felt both complimented for having reintroduced a traditional technique to the world, and also sharply criticized that my work was nothing more than a technical achievement. Because of this comment I returned to the basic questions of materials and technique in jewelry. I realized that not to use metal and technique would be a new direction for me. I was also charmed by the conceptual designs of Issei Miyake, a world-famous Japanese fashion designer: first, his basic idea derived from the traditional kimono, a combination of rectangular shapes that, when worn, take on a new shape, creating a contemporary look; second, when this piece of clothing is not on the human body, people cannot tell what it is. It looks like an odd-shaped throw rug. It changes form because of the choice of material—soft, flexible and stretchable—in this case thin knitted wool.

I decided to try paper as a material for jewelry due in part to my previous experience in producing handmade papers at the Twin Rocker papermill in Indiana in 1978. My first piece was a neckpiece. It looked like a placemat on a table, but changed form when worn. Paper alone was too fragile to be worn, so I used canvas as a flexible inner support material. I worked with richly textured Japanese paper to avoid flat, smooth surfaces. The result of this work was adequate, but I still wasn't satisfied. I was only playing with material and form. The work lacked content. It did not have "heart."

While purchasing Japanese paper at the store, I saw, by accident, another beautiful material—papercord. Available in gold, silver, white, black and red, this papercord is

Takeo Unno, *Night at Spring* water container, pot—raised shakudo and partially gold gilded; lid—repoussé rabbit, chased with silver, 1981

Shomin Unno, *Fish Study,* copper, very low relief and carved; partially gilded eyes are inlaid, 4¾ x 4"



Koryusai Kazunori, *Eagles,* 24k gold repoussé and chased, inlaid with shakudo and carved detail, 1½" l. menuki, 1895

Mitsutora Shiraski, *Paperweight,* steel with damascene in silver an gold, 7¼ x ⅜", 1974

called mizuhiki in Japan, where it is traditionally used for ritual purposes and gift wrapping. I had never seen the material before in its original form. I was intuitively drawn to it, perhaps because the gold and silver colors reminded me of metals.

The beginning of my work with Japanese paper and papercord coincided with a period of deep reflection upon the meaning of my life. I experienced a feeling of emptiness and purposelessness, which everyone confronts at some point. I pondered my own mortality and tried to come to terms with the eventual death of my parents. Even though I had a successful career and was happily married, something was missing. I was not satisfied. I had always thought that one of the reasons for producing art is that it would give me some discipline and serve as a form of meditation. Why wasn't I getting peace of mind from my work? Why was I dissatisfied?

When I began my work with papercord, these feelings were flowing though my heart—that life is like a dream and that someday the light of my life would go out. I began to see an analogy in the papercord material: it is like the length of a person's life; there is a beginning and an end. In spite of its apparent fragility and threadlike form, the bright metallic colors of the papercord create an illusion of strength and permanence, an illusion similar to the one under which we live a large part of our lives. In making my papercord jewelry, I realized that form can have meaning beyond mere abstract beauty (see *Table of Contents* page for illustration). The contrasts between this organic material and its artificial metallic color, and between the traditional applications of papercord and these abstract designs, comment on the evolution of man's position in the universe. We are part of the natural world and of a historic and cultural world of our own making.

At the same time that I was working with papercord, these new insights were becoming evident in my metalwork. I love working with metal, I enjoy the feeling of it. And while searching for sources and influences in books and at exhibitions, I had found that the work that made the strongest impression on me was traditional Japanese metalwork. I found that the natural motifs in the traditional pieces were very fresh and literal. While I appreciated the excellence of their craftsmanship, for which the Japanese masters are justifiably famous, their unpretentiousness made me feel relaxed and comfortable.

I tried to analyze why these pieces made me feel this way. What gave their work such a joy of life and a dignity and power, even though they were small in scale? These were qualities that my work seemed to lack, and I was determined to find the answers. As a result, I have been traveling to Japan to study with master metalsmiths. While studying with these masters, I did not question or argue with their opinions. I accepted them, thinking that I would analyze their attitudes and thoughts after I had experienced them. Arguing the philosophy of their craft would have reduced my experience to theory. I am a metalsmith, not a theorist.

During this study I found that traditional Japanese metalwork uses traditional techniques and motifs drawn from nature to emphasize both function and esthetic value. Do the constraints on technique and motif enhance or limit the content of traditional Japanese metalwork?

To answer that question, we must understand the cultural background that forms the philosophical and esthetic basis of Japanese metalwork. I have found that, despite the accelerating Westernization of Japanese society, its moral and esthetic values are still strongly rooted in Zen philosophy.

A good illustration of Zen's influence is the development and continued popularity of the Japanese rock garden. The rock garden creates and presents a universe within limited space. Its intention is to touch the core of nature, helping man to reach enlightenment by releasing the human spirit from the three-dimensional world into the indeterminate universal space.

The rock garden was created as a means of practicing the "way to enlightment" through the contemplation of nature. The philosophy exemplified by the Japanese rock garden is a strong force in the work of traditional Japanese metalsmiths. They derive their motifs from nature; their work displays an elegant simplicity of design that creates an universe within the confines of space and material; and the strict discipline in their training and work leads to the state of selflessness that is the goal of Zen meditation.

In Japan, each metalsmith has a specialty, much like medical doctors have in the United States. If a Japanese metalsmith's technique is raising, or if it is casting, he or she employs only raising or casting. Surface decoration is strictly surface decoration. An enamelist works only at enameling, since, as the fusion of glass to metal, it requires a different set of techniques than does metalwork. This high level of specialization enables Japaneses craftspeople to polish their skills and to achieve a high level of craftsmanship. There is also specialization in the types of objects that Japanese metalsmiths make based on both historical and philosophical grounds.

Perhaps the words of the Japanese masters with whom I have been studying can help explain the nature of their work as well as answer some of the questions that face us as craftspeople today. The following are phrases by a number of Japanese metalsmiths that I have recorded over the years.

On Concept and Content

- *In my case, "arting" may be the word that applies. My goal is to touch nature. Nature is my master and friend.*
- *When you design wild weeds in a field, let's say you are not just sketching the field or the*

I have found that, despite the accelerating Westernization of Japanese society, its moral and esthetic values are still strongly rooted in Zen philosophy.

Craft is the quality production of objects by hand, objects that have function and connotation of spirit or expression. The object is defined by its relevance to human existence.

wild weeds. Your eyes and mind should be like a poet.

- *You cannot just sketch the outside of an object. If you sketch only the form, the object you produce will be just an object, you will not be able to read or communicate the spirit of the motif. When you are ready to sketch, you must confront the motif. Face it and observe it. When you want to sketch a tree, see how the tree is growing, observe its surroundings. What are the relationships of space, light and background? What is the tree like when the wind blows into it? What will happen on a rainy day? Is the tree happy or unhappy? Does it suffer? Is it saying, "Well, I was OK before but now I am not so good" or, "I was in terrible shape but I am fine now." You can carry on these conversations to understand the spirit of the motif. There is no lack of such conversation, and so there are virtually endless motifs. The point is, how willing and able you are to converse with nature, to listen to nature and try to understand what is behind the surface of things. Deep inside you will find the nobility, value and preciousness of life.*
- *When you make a piece, it is important to become one with the subject itself. Take the case of a deer: you become the deer and the spirit of the deer. When you are making a bird, you take on the figure of the bird and fly into the sky. When you are inlaying the line of a vine, the movement of your body is the vine, and your hand is the growing tip of the vine. If you make a piece in this way, your work will touch the heart and mind of the viewer. If it doesn't, there must be some impurity in your work.*
- *I want to create the innocent joy that we feel when we look at a baby smiling; it makes us smile even if we are not its parents.*

On Material

- *How can the artist express feeling with a particular material, such as metal? I confront the metal, and use it just as if it were alive, just like a growing flower. If you don't plant the flower in good soil, or you fail to water or fertilize it, if it doesn't receive the proper amount of sunlight, the flower will not bloom. I feel a love for the metal. If you approach a material in this way, you will discover its different charms: it may be happy or sad, quiet or noisy . . .*
- *Though the metal is strong and hard, it can sometimes be melted or bent, it can be changed from heavy to light. It can be cheerful. Through different treatments you can even pull out some gentleness. If you can see this in the metal, you can express your feelings on the surface.*
- *Under the restriction of the material, I have tried to express some feeling in the steel surface—unsophisticated roughness, or sometimes gentleness, grace and elegance.*

On Technique

- *Because materials have physical restrictions, you must employ techniques you can control (any way you like) to express feeling.*
- *Beautiful material is not equal to beauty. It is the responsibility of the artist to develop and push the material to achieve a level of expression. For this purpose, because metal is such a difficult material to work, long discipline and study are needed. Through this discipline you will also discover yourself.*
- *There should be an accumulation of technique that will enable you to know and control materials.*
- *Technique is necessary to produce craft that brings joy to people's hearts. While is is important to understand and experiment with new methods, there is meaning in the use of traditional techniques. Human beings are a mixture of the traditional and conservative as well as the progressive.*
- *If a craftsperson is a true artist, he or she will not try to defeat the material by imposing technique. The technique is only a means of drawing the expressive qualities from the material.*

On Craft

- *The goal of craft is to produce a functional object with spirit and beauty by hand.*
- *Craft means to produce an object within the constraints of a particular material.*
- *Craft is an expression of the admiration of life within the context of usage and esthetics.*
- *It is not necessary to be distinctly original. Superb craftsmanship will reveal the touch of your hand. It doesn't matter that you use old forms or traditional motifs with traditional techniques, because you will find beauty beyond age.*

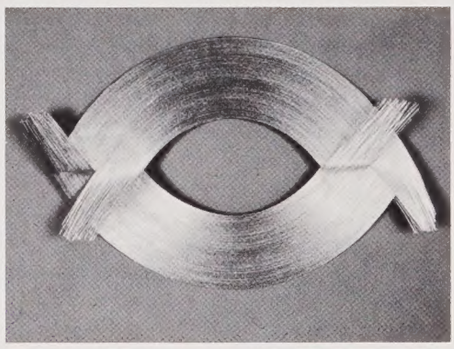
Comments

The point of quoting from these Japanese masters, aside from the intrinsic beauty of the thoughts, is that even within the constraints of materials, traditional Japanese techniques and even traditional form, there is the opportunity, perhaps even the duty, for the artist to express both spirit and emotion. This idea of expressive freedom within constraints may be illustrated by the following analogy.

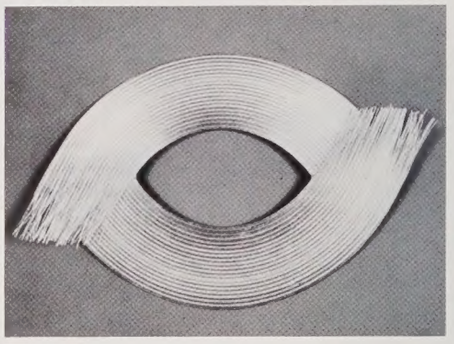
I was watching a television program on Baryshnikov performing classical ballet. When he dances, he creates an atmosphere on stage through the movement of his body.

Mitsumasa Yonemitsu, *Swordguard (Tsuba)*, damascus steel with gold wire inlay; pierced areas are the abstract shape of the eyes of a butterfly, 3″ d., 1977

Shoen Suga, *Oni* wallpiece, cast bronze, 9 x 9″, c 1966



Hiroko Sato Pijanowski, *Oh! I am precious No. 19* neckpiece, Japanese papercord (mizuhiki) and canvas, glued, 27 x 17 x ¼", 1988



Hiroko Sato Pijanowski, *Oh! I am precious No. 7* neckpiece, Japanese papercord (mizuhiki) and canvas, glued, 27 x 17 x ¼", 1986

The lines of his steps create lines on the stage, and the lines create forms. If he is not skillful in the execution of the steps, the audience will not be touched by his movement. He says that the emotion he puts into the dance is the most important. The classical steps become nothing, only a part of the whole. He can say this because he has mastered the classical steps and they are now a part of his body. The audience can enjoy this tangible process (in this case dancing) with the artist while he is performing. The resultant piece will remain as an intangible image in the mind of the viewer.

In the case of the craftsperson, while the processes of thought and creation involved in making the piece are intangible, the audience is presented with the quality of a tangible result. If classical dance and music are played again and again, yet enjoyed by people a bit differently each time they are performed, then can the same principle be applied to the field of metalwork? I believe that this is the idea behind the philosophy of traditional Japanese metalsmiths.

Based on my studies with Japanese craftspeople, I feel traditional Japanese metalwork reflects the spirit of the artist. They love the materials with which they work—metal—and face it with an attitude of honesty and obedience. Their work shows the internal psychological expression of the strength and freshness of life, and the beauty of wisdom, intelligence and depth of sensibility. With regard to the object's functionality in daily life, the Japanese masters believe that if they are honest about themselves in their conversations with nature, and make every effort to produce feeling in their work, the audience will be touched by it.

The reflection of the artist's spirit in traditional Japanese metalwork is very subtle, partly because of the constraints of material and function, but also because the work is very carefully thought out and executed with superb technique. Their work leads me to the universe of beauty through delicate changes in sensibility brought about by careful attention.

There are traces of the unconscious resistance to materials and tools by the hands of the master craftspeople that results in a synthesis of the material beauty and the artist's personality. They are finding a joy in crafting these pieces, and playing in the world of self-effacement (that is, in a state of spiritual selflessness). When the work achieves these qualities, the audience can share some of the same joy and feel the individual artist's personality when they touch the object. Interestingly, though traditional Japanese metalwork employs realistic, natural motifs, it is an interpretation, not an imitation, of nature. This work does not confront the viewer, it is not directly about meaning. It embodies dignity, power and life in an unpretentious manner. This is self-expression at its most refined.

The Japanese approach is for the artist and the material to become one. Craft should reflect the artist's joyful search for truth and communicate this joy to the viewer, making his or her heart beat honestly and freshly. A mastery of technique is indispensable if the finished work is to achieve spiritual expression. If the craftsperson is a true artist, he will use skill as a tool, rather than an egotistical demonstration of his mastery over materials.

Craft is the quality production of objects by hand, objects that have function and connotation of spirit or expression. The object is defined by its relevance to human existence. It is dependent upon the use and perception of the viewer, otherwise, it has no importance. It is the artist's responsibility to combine the functional characteristics of craft with esthetics and expression.

Hiroko Sato Pijanowski, *Neckpiece,* Japanese papercord, which looks like a mat when off the body

Craft produces something that is physical, that produces joy when it is *held and touched, much like the human body.* For this reason craft is concerned with issues of scale and detail. The most comfortable size for a piece is determined by human scale. The height of a person while standing or sitting, the length of arms and legs, the size and shape of the human hand and the living space in an ordinary home or public building are all considerations. The weight of the crafted piece also influences the effect it will have on the viewer or holder.

Quality craft is spiritual existence, as well as the combination of head, heart and hand, both in making the pieces and in the audience's response to them.

Professor Richard Guyatt of the Royal College of Art in London noted the relationship between heart, head and hand when someone experiences the emotional urge to create. These three components are integral to any type of art, from industrial to fine art to craft art.

- Industrial art springs primarily from the intellect but is dependent upon the skill of craftspeople and the esthetic response of the people that comprise the market.
- Fine art must, of necessity, include all three human qualities, even though it may emphasize one or two. Without judgement, emotion or technique, fine art would be devoid of interest.
- The craftsperson seeks to express form and function though the beauty of skill. If the artist does not combine hand and head to organize and execute the work, and heart to create a sense of spirit and a relationship to society, the work will be purely masturbatory.

The lines between industrial art, craft and fine art are not at all clear, since they all require the application of heart, head and hand.

Art and Craft

- Embrace honestly and enthusiastically an event in nature and the universe.
- Produce a response, and then a memory in the mind of the audience through the application of the human intellect at work.

The role of the artist is to absorb information and, through a sometimes subconscious process of abstraction, recombination and/or juxtaposition, to produce some new insight or truth.

- Demand a high level of skill to work within the limitations of material and the considerations of function, yet still achieve a level of personal expression.

Personal Direction

My studies with the Japanese masters pointed the way for me to develop the marriage of heart and hand that I had been seeking. My extensive research and study of technique had given me the tools with which to work, but now I had to find my voice, to define what I wanted to express.

When I returned from Japan, I produced two small pieces (about 4 x 4) titled *Cherry Blossoms at Night* and *Autumn*. These attempts were unsatisfactory, although I couldn't say why. I went back to my notes, and my collection of materials. About the same time, I started to visit the Zen temple in Ann Arbor. Long periods of quite meditation helped me begin to find a sense of personal direction. This, too, was a form of research for me as an artist. My current work focuses on expression. I am interested in creating images that communicate emotions to the audience.

I wish to express a soothing antedote for the loneliness and emptiness in life, a common and profoundly human feeling. I want to offer the audience relief and warmth, the chance to forget the ugliness and sadness of the world.

I try to create a sense of relaxation and contentment: the feeling that one gets after working hard; the sensation of a soft, mild breeze caressing one's cheek; the faint sound of falling leaves; or the sparkle of reflections of the sun on water. The perception and contemplation of these qualities dispels feelings of emptiness and isolation. My goal is to capture and distill these moments in my work, achieving an universal poetry that I can share with the audience.

As an example, I want to produce a koi, or Japanese carp, realistically in metal. The koi is swimming in a pond with no exit. What can the koi do? It is the exaggeration and emphasis of what life is and how to react to it. I selected the koi from many varieties of fish because it is domesticated, trapped in its environment, the way that people are trapped in society. A no-exit pond represents life or society, its frustrations and limitations. But life continues. I hope to place the koi in such a way that we can see his contentment in spite of his confinement.

But as you can imagine, it is extremely difficult to communicate complex emotions like these using only visual metaphors, especially in metal, which is a difficult material to work with. How can you express the sound of quietness of the mild breeze of spring? How can I visually represent the subtle sound of the koi swimming? In an attempt to resolve this problem, I began to write haiku to accompany each piece.

Haiku is simple but connotes a universe. It can express sound and light, and include reverberations and suggestions. I write haiku to create a verbal environment to guide my audience. Another solution was suggested to me when I saw an exhibition of the work of the late Japanese painter Toshio Arimoto. He used paintings of small balls in his work, and it seemed to me that they could symbolize sound. As a result, I have been exploring the use of round quartz balls to suggest sound or spirit in some of my pieces.

The result of all my research, both tangible and intangible—the marriage of heart, hand and head noted by Professor Guyatt—can be seen in my current series on the theme "Gentle Solitude."

A frozen sea
Drifting cherry blossom
Za Zen

Hiroko Sato Pijanowski, *Gentle Solitude Series* table sculpture/brooch, fine silver, gilded, shiubuichi, rose quartz, plexiglass, sterling silver, repoussé, chased, carved, constructed and rebedded, base 18 x 17 x 3", brooch 2¼ x 2¼ x 1¼", 1986

The frozen sea represents life and society, while I am the cherry blossom. I am drifting in life and confused, but if I row my boat correctly I will be O.K. The rose quartz is my spirit. I am confused, so my self and my spirit are separated. Za Zen is meditation, through which I seek to find peace of mind.

Conclusion

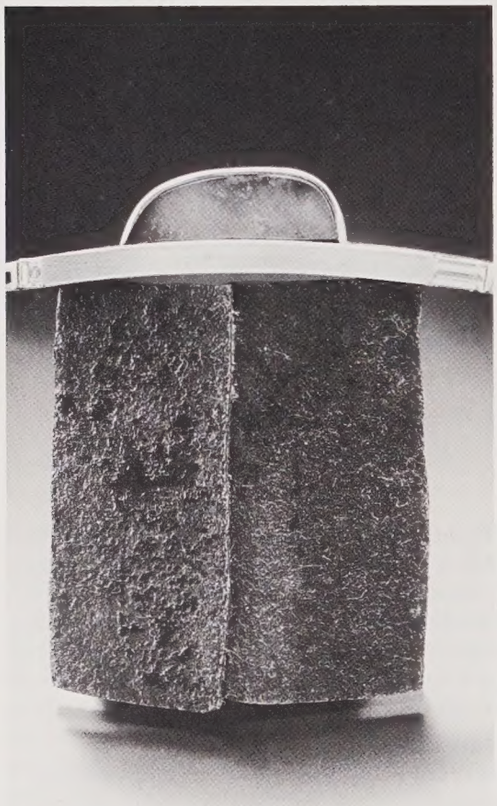
There are many goals, methods and types of research in art. R. Buckminster Fuller once said that "Really great artists are scientists and really great scientists are artists." He based his statement on the fact that creative thought is based, in great part, on intuition. This is because, he says, "the physical is forever transforming, while the metaphysical is forever clarifying, resolved towards imperishable simplicity and stability."

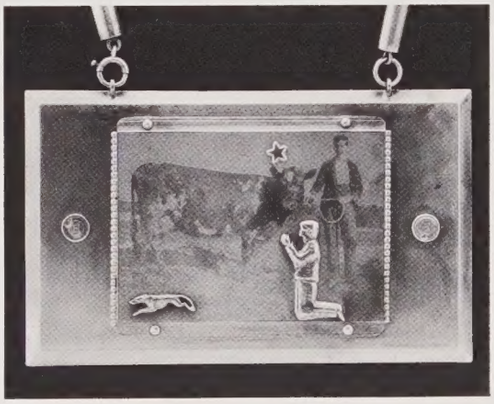
Art is an illuminating vocation that requires continual self-analysis in order to unveil the unknown both within and beyond the self. Artists move into the space between sources and influences, hoping to return with knowledge and vision in their hands. Art can touch every phase of human life and make it that much more comfortable and beautiful.

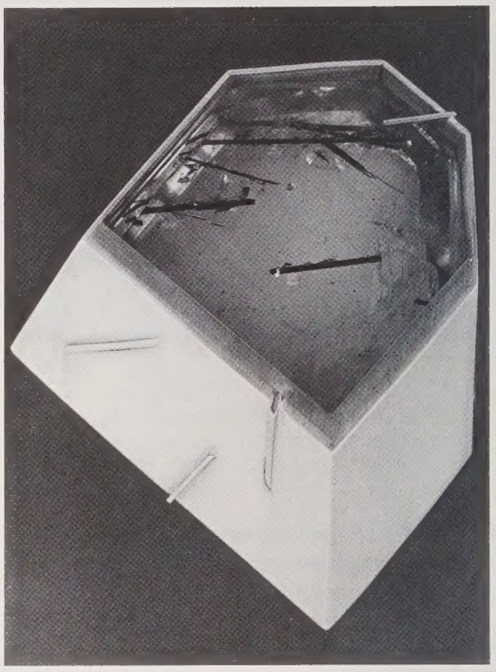
Research for the artist means being open to all of the stimuli in the world around and within him; being attuned to the sources and influences in the natural and cultural environments. Once this information is absorbed, the artist combines a thorough knowledge of materials and techniques with the analytical qualities of the intellect and the subtle suggestions of intuition. The creative process in art is the never-ending search for answers, even though none may ever be found.

Hiroko Sato Pijanowski is a Professor of Art at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Versions of this paper were presented at the "Craft as Content" symposium in October, 1987 at the University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, organized by Christina DePaul and at the Society of North American Goldsmiths' annual conference in June, 1988 at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY, organized by Tim McCreight.







Left: Pat Flynn, *Brooch,* steel, 18k gold, opal, diamond, 1½ x ¼ x ¼", 1987. Photo: Ralph Gabriner; **above:** J. Fred Woell, *West of Jersey* pendant, copper, brass, silver, 2¾ x 4¼ x ¼", 1987; **right:** Eleanor Moty, *Tourmalinated Crystal Brooch II,* sterling silver, 18k gold, tourmalinated quartz, 2¼ x 2½ x ½", 1987

Goldsmithing: New Concepts and Ancient Traditions in Jewelry

Lousiana State University Union Art Gallery, Baton Rouge
February 5-March 4, 1988
curated by Barbara Minor and Christopher Hentz

This invitational exhibition composed of works by 25 American jewelry designers gave the audience a perspective on the diverse nature of what is being done nationally in contemporary art jewelry. All of the work chosen displayed a contemporary use of traditional goldsmithing processes or the integration of modern technology. In an effort to represent the full range of art jewelry being made today, some pieces were limited production while others were one-of-a-kind.

The stress on contemporary uses of traditional materials was noted by *Baton Rouge State Times-Morning Advocate* reviewer Jean McMullan who wrote: "Pat Flynn of New Paltz, N.Y., uses a simple colored pencil to get the needed color in his jewelry. Kate Wagle of Mesilla, N.M., includes different colors of gold plate in her delicate pins. The combination of unrelated elements is one characteristic of Fred Woell's work. Thomas Mann of New Orleans also can be credited with a like combination of unusual materials as well as perhaps the first jewelry artist to incorporate collage in his work. Another new concept is to be found in the slightly irregular surfaces of enameled pieces—defying the tradition of the very smooth surface. Leonard Urso of Scottsville, N.Y., creates jewelry that emphasizes the material but also includes in his simple shapes faint images that emerge from the material."

Included also in the show was the work of Tom Lorio, Baton Rouge, LA; Colette, Berkeley, CA; Mary Chuduk, Tempe, AZ; Barbara McFayden, Chapel Hill, NC; Peggy Johnson, Philadelphia, PA; Els Herber NYC; David Peterson, W. Lafayette, IN; Randy Long, Bloomington, IN; Harold O'Connor, Taos, NM; Jamie Bennett, New Paltz, NY; Richard Mawdsley, Carterville, IL; Kathy Buszkiewicz, Cleveland Heights, OH; Michael Good, Camden, ME; Bruce Metcalf, Kent, OH; Mary Lee Hu, Seattle, WA;Claire Sanford, Cambridge, MA; Barbara Heinrich, Rochester, NY; Micki Lippe, Seattle, WA and the curators, Barbara Minor and Christopher Hentz.

Eleanor Moty

Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, IL
February 19-March 19, 1988
by Karl J. Moehl

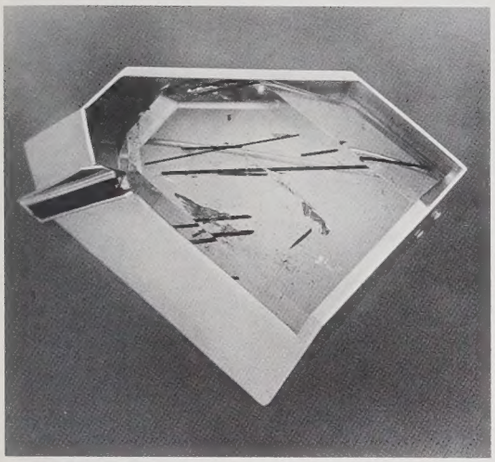
This was a small, but enlightening exhibition of recent work by Moty. Five works were dated 1988, six 1987 and one each 1984 and 1983. All were sterling and 14k gold setting for polyangular cuttings of rutilated or tourmalinated quartz crystals, the sort of thing that has occupied the artist throughout the decade.

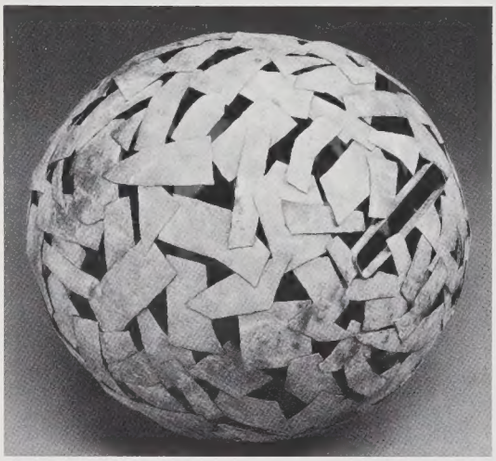
During the 70s, Moty worked in a variety of art metal forms, often involving photographic images, for circumspect, but nonethless pop images. Her switch to her present work was a profound change. Always clever and technically flawless, she now turned toward perfection. An exercise of surprise and delight now became an endeavor toward absolute exactitiude.

What happens is this: Moty takes pieces of quartz crystal that are "flawed" by a multitiude of rodlike shapes of the metallic mineral's rutile and/or tourmaline. She cuts these in various faceted shapes, keeping in mind the random patternization of the rods, using a process evidently less easy than it appears. Next, she fashions the sterling setting, which, of course, sheaths the sides of the quartz, but thickly or thinly so, depending on compositional demands. This frame is then further enriched by appended elements, most often silver rods that correspond and react to the haptic rutile or tourmaline rods within the quartz. Or the appendages may be knobs or more complex accretions—in this showing we find leopidilite, sapphire, topaz and, of course, gold.

Realizing the apparent method does not itself account for the effect, which is both simple and complex, intuitive and intellectual in its appeal, and seems most exactly to afford "pure joy" in the sense Brancusi meant it. This is definitive jewelry: stone and setting in faultless accord. Something precious, but with all sentimentality banished along with ceremonial function, worked to an end that seems beyond fashion or style categories—this is what Moty gives us.

This observer sees this work as miniature sculpture. The display here clipped the brooches—for that is what Moty calls them—to plexiglass panels held diagonally within plexiglass boxes. The light streamed through the near-colorless quartz, dramatizing the all-important rods, and caused the metallic surfaces to glow. It would





Above, left to right: Eleanor Moty, *Tourmalinated Crystal Brooch I,* sterling silver, 14k gold, tourmalinated quartz, tourmaline crystal, 3¼ x 2¼ x 1". Photo: Jim Threadgill; Claire Sanford, *Moving Brittle Noise,* copper, cupric nitrate patina, rock, 16 x 18 x 14", Daron Sachs, *Skit Iddly It Dot,* painted steel, 60 x 28 x 26", 1985

seem that the effect would be lessened if the quartz were set against something opaque, or forced to conform to anything other than some idealized well-lit space.

Perfection, we must realize, gets mixed reviews. Witness the example of the Portland vase, reduced to shatters by unconscious revolt, or take those engineers who had railroad tracks laid close by the Taj Mahal. Even if one is not driven to attack Michelangelo's *Pieta* with a maniac chisel, perfection in any form is liable to fester a spot of irritation. Moty avoid or compounds such reaction according to one's viewpoint. Her designs confront the accidental in nature through her response to the rods. For the artist this provides an open-ended challenge and an unending theme. But, also, she entraps nature and thus makes it conform to the artist's will. Some might call this the essence of art. Indeed, let's call it that!

Contemporary Metals USA III

Downey Museum of Art, Downey, CA
October 29-December 18, 1987
by Carolyn Novin

Downey's third national metals show, juried by Christina Smith, differed from the previous two in several ways. There was less color and brilliant colorizing of metals, less jewelry and fewer objects. But, in this case, less was quite a bit more: more use of patinas to signify age, more small-scale sculpture, more objects that attempted to express archetypal or subconscious content. Both jewelry and sculpture evidenced a preference for assembly over the shaping of a singular object. Fortunately, the individuality of the 98 artists and 118 works presented proscribed any neat categorization of this show, where many artists sought didactic rather than decorative effects.

Often the title of a piece acted as an essential component; some titles amplified what they named, as in *Moving Brittle Nose,* a rattle-headed lattice of patinaed copper strips by Claire Sanford, placed atop a shoulder-high pedestal. *Skit iddly it dot,* the title of Daron Sach's pink, red, yellow, black and orange painted steel construction, was a verbal translation, with a Memphis accent, of its geometric units.

Other works, with ambiguous titles, were incomplete until the viewer, like a quantum mechanic, resolved the seeming disjunture. For example, *Wild Thing,* a silver, nickel, bronze brooch by Fred Scott didn't appear wild in setting or demeanor, so did the title identify the beast or the wearer?

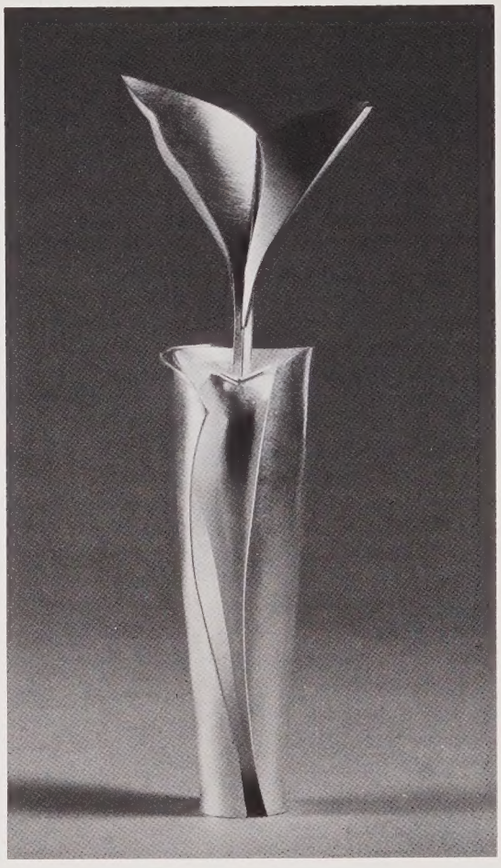
Roger Snyder, and others, used metal and other materials for mixed-media constructions. Though anyone who has played with electricity would have felt a visceral response to Snyder's *Only a Means to an End,* the dynamic power of this piece came from the juxtaposition of readymade photo mural, fuse boxes and plastic men, one literally "burnt out," sitting in for the fuses. The varied meanings elicited by form and materials heightened awareness of the potentials of human use and abuse.

Many artists made a small-scale tableaux to explore issues of humanness and humaneness, *The Sport* by Carolyn Dunn was a disturbing portrait, in the form of a trophy, of everyman's values, lineage and legacy. Bruce Metcalf enlarged scale for striking effect in his *African Adornment* pendant, a seven-and one-half inch square replica of a 35mm slide, hung from a camera strap. Metcalf completed the camera reference with photorealistic depiction, in metal, of a native African woman. Beautiful, but certainly uncomfortable to wear, it posed some uncomfortable questions about exploitation and the taking of images, symbols, even people, out of the cultures in which they have meaning.

While I saw "high-tech" materials and designs, a greater number of objects depicted the human form or represented the human spirit and experience, as in Donna Pioli's endearing biomorph *Overturned.* Julie Eamer's *Cycladic Idols* and *Manitou* by Tony Shaw evoked reconnection with our heritage from pre-technological cultures. Two brooding sentinels, Timothy Doyle's *Old Guards,* rose, like spirits made manifest, from the centers of their power bases.

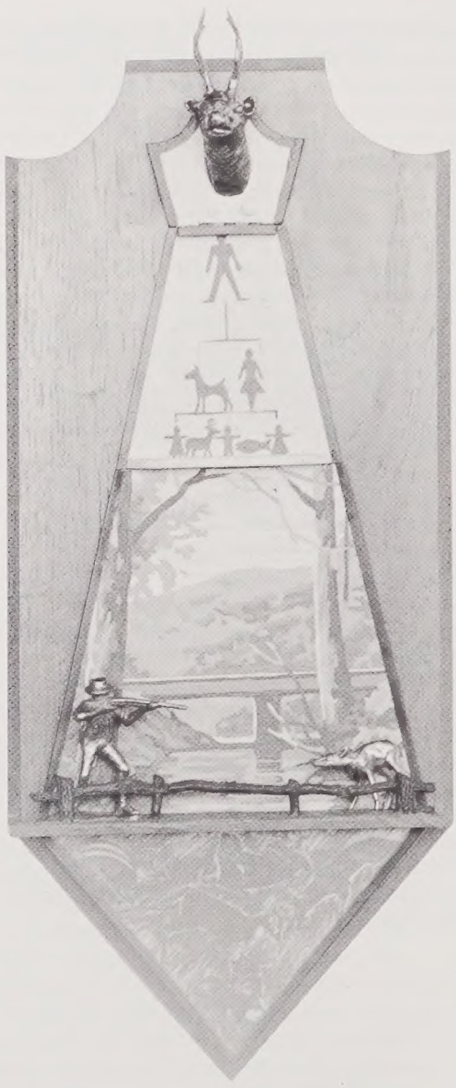
Though their imagery could be deconstructed, it was personally much more rewarding to witness the stark confrontation between forged wrought iron and stone in Fred Borcherdt's *Die Marker,* to enjoy the multifoliate grace of Sue Amendolara's sterling perfume bottle and to appreciate the technical and material splendor of Mark Stanitz's gold brooch with zirconium cube.

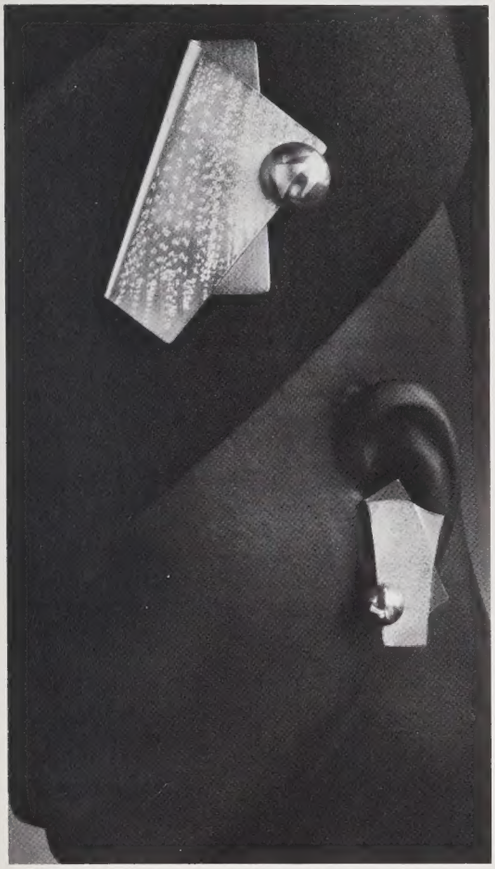
If art has no inherent meaning, and if we learn to see and to invest meaning with a system of gender and culture directed codes, then all art is didactic. This show successfully demonstrated that it is vital for art as it questions the givens, to be accessible but not clichéd, and to remember that beauty and humor, as well as "drama," have great educational potential.

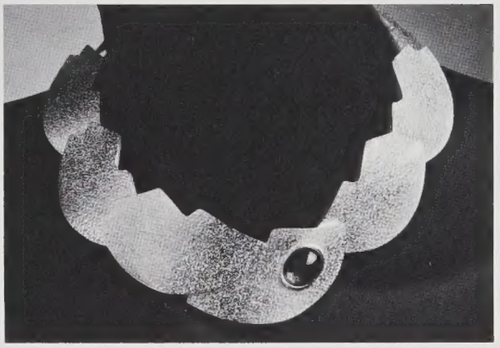


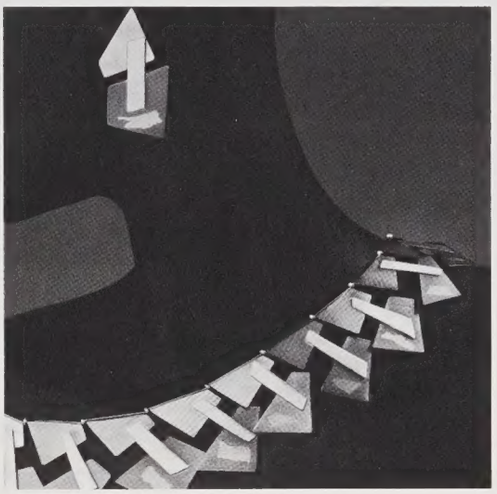
Clockwise from top left: Timothy Doyle, *Old Guard on Duty by Day,* cast aluminum, 45 x 9½ x 9″; Sue Amendolara, *Perfume Bottle. Untitled,* sterling silver, 7 x 3 x 3″; Fred Borcherdt, *Die Marker,* forged wrought iron, fieldstone, 14 x 30 x 7″; Donna Pioli, *Overturned,* bronze, copper, 6 x 3 x 10″; Fred Scott, *Wild Thing,* nickel, bronze, silver 3 x 4½″; Carolyn Dunn, *The Sport,* wood, bronze, paint, 12 x 7 x 2″;

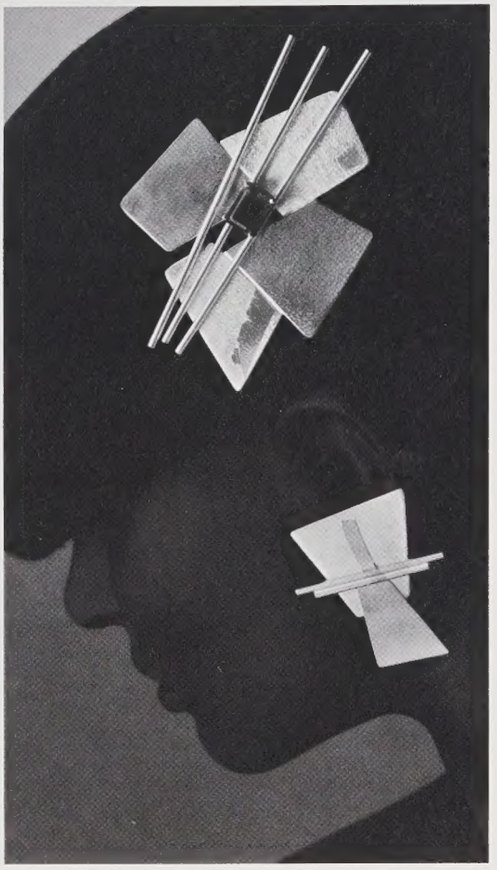
Opposite page, left: Dalya Luttwak, *Japanese Patchwork #3* pin and earrings, sterling silver, 18k and 24k gold, oxidization, gold overlay and construction, pin 3 x 1¾″; **center, top:** Patricia Perito, *Nacho #1* necklace, cast and constructed, 8 x 7 x ¼″; **below:** Dalya Luttwak, *Neckpiece and Earrings,* sterling silver, 18k and 24k gold, rolled, gold overlay, constructed and oxydized, neckpiece 9″ d. Photo Richard Rodriguez; **far right:** Dalya Luttwak, *Pin and Earrings,* sterling silver, 18k and 24k gold and iolite stone, gold overlay and construction, pin 3½ x 2½″, earrings 2 x ½″











Dalya Luttwak: Japanese Patchwork

Plum Gallery, Kensington, MD
June 14-July 28, 1987
by Yvonne Arritt

With the current emphasis on economic competition, balance of trade and export-import quotas between the United States and Japan, there is one significant field that the Japanese have neglected, not even begun to explore: the use of jewelry as a form of cultural expression.

Perhaps it takes an international traveler with a discerning eye to recognize that omission, distill the essence of the country and translate it in tangible terms. Dalya Luttwak, who holds dual American/Israeli citizenship, has captured the spirit of elegant simplicity in her recent collection of 40 necklaces, pins and earrings.

"Japanese Patchwork" is the synthesis of images and impressions acquired during three visits to the Far East. In forms suggesting gates, gardens, kimono sleeves and sails, tea ceremonies and traffic patterns, her work reflects a mélange of past and present, at once delicate and static, yet colorful and bold, filled with complex harmonies. She identifies seasonal color schemes, employing 18k and 24k gold overlay on sterling in the keum boo technique with pearls, aquamarines and peridots for summer; oxidizes the silver for stronger contrast in conjunction with lapis, garnet and black onyx for her winter palette. Her strongest designs are reminiscent of traditional table settings or ingenious wrapping and packaging methods. In these, the trapezoidal gold appliqués echo and reinforce the objects' oblique lines, richly embellishing repeated elements. It is a harmonious blend of oriental ambiance and western sensibility; one wishes that there were a practical way to export these elegant hybrids and show the Japanese what they are missing.

H. Charles Schwarz: Metal

Susan Cummins Gallery, Mill Valley, CA
September 1-26, 1987
by Roberta Floden

H. Charles Schwarz is a master technician. In each of his pieces, he uses an interesting combination of materials, including bronze, bone micarta, damascus steel, pewter, sterling, copper, gold and brass. His execution appears flawless. However, amidst an exceptionally high-quality display of metalsmith art at the Susan Cummins Gallery (including the work of Carolyn Morris Bach, Thomas Mann and Jaclyn Davidson), his jewelry, shot glasses and containers seem belabored and dry.

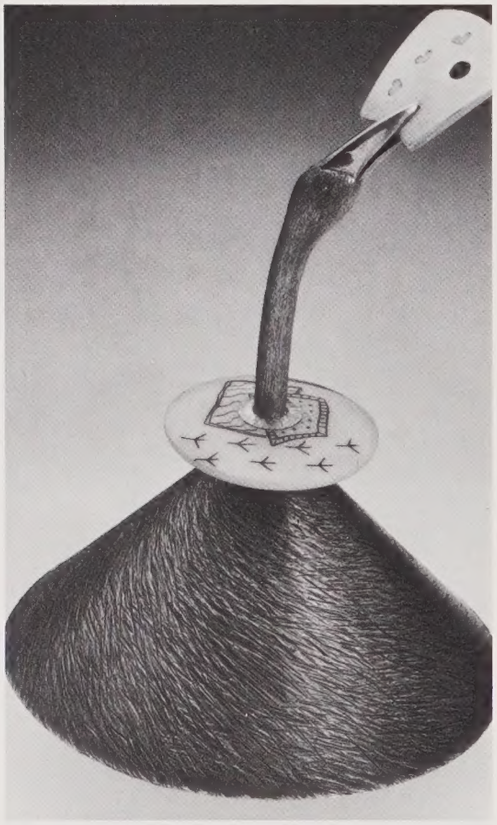
One of the more obvious problems with Schwarz's work is that it is heavily dependent upon a personal icon—the finely shaped head and neck of a water fowl—a slight variation of which he has repeated on every piece in the show. His shot glasses use this icon as a handle, the containers as a decoration and his brooches and bracelets use this icon soldered to a snakelike body made from a damascus steel coil. Schwarz's titles call attention to this focus: *Mythical Bird Emergence, Crane with a Golden Heart, Bird with a Shimmering Recollection #2, Bird with a Sentimental Fascination #2,* the "with" referring to a contrasting metallic construction stuck in the bird's beak. Unfortunately, the differences in decorative detail and shape that do exist—a scrimshawed micarta collar, a geometric tail, an incised or gold inlaid body, a "recollection" as opposed to a "fascination"—neither caught nor held my interest.

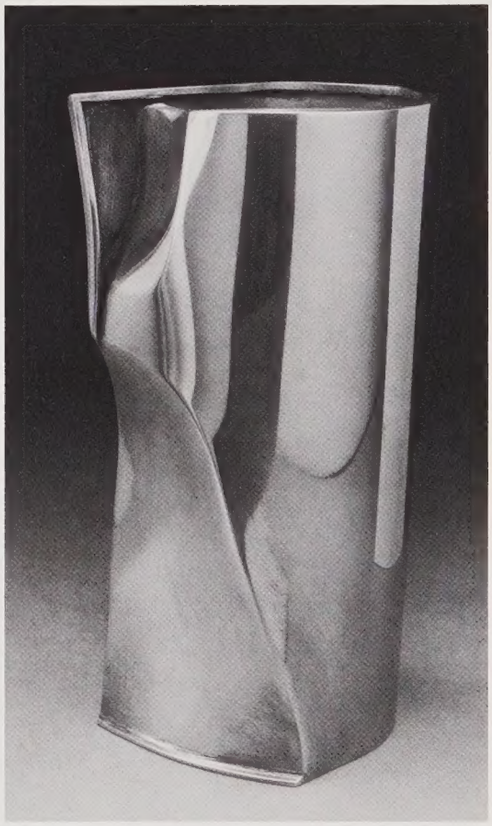
Of all his pieces, this icon serves most effectively on the brooches. Here, against the background of a garment, the juxtaposition of a variety of metals, the differing shapes and the delicate details of each piece is dramatized. The brooches are also noteworthy for their latches, which are ingeniously and compatibly incorporated into the ornamentation. Another welcome feature is that each brooch comes with a small but sophisticated lucite stand that serves to display it when not being worn.

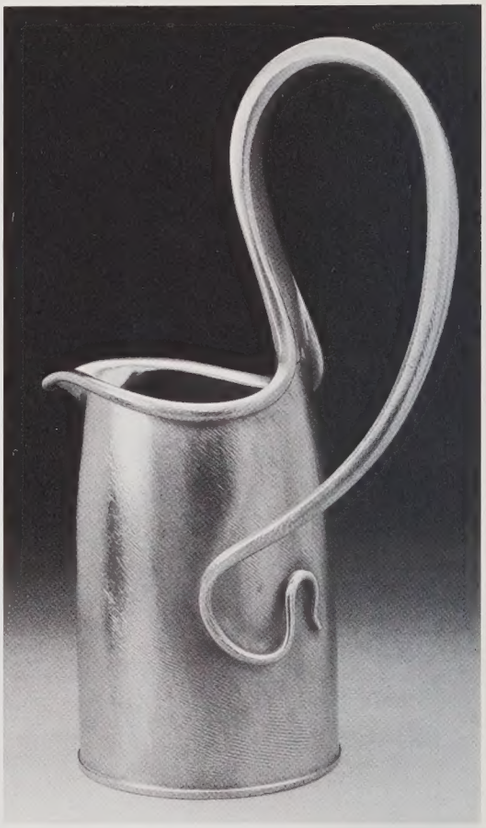
But this design has much less appeal in the bracelets. Between the bird's neck and the snakelike body, Schwarz has placed an unattractive intrusive element of asymmetrical copper. This element may work practically as a weight to keep the bracelet in place—which these pieces unfortunately require—but the variety of shapes and metals common to each piece makes the bracelet appear clumsy and disproportionate. This is compounded by another problem. Schwarz has created a design that is made from steel, and his bracelets are completely unadjustable. I was unable to get any of them over my normal-sized hand.

Schwarz's shot glasses are simple, unified and esthetically pleasing, but again, like the bracelets, the design is impractical. Made of textured pewter and echoing his former titles *(Goose with a Golden Fascination, Crane with a Found Object),* they sit bottoms up, and the bird's neck and head function as a handle. Thus, if you were actually to use this item, it could not be put down as long as there was liquid in the glass.

Schwarz's pewter containers are probably the least successful of his work. The containers themselves are candy-dish sized, three of the four having a reference to lids that do not operate as such. Affixed to two of these lids







are, again, bird's heads, but the other two have a refreshing "mad dog-head" variation. Awkwardly sitting underneath each "lid" for balance is either a copper cone or a scrimshawed micarta knife. The pewter itself is textured, perhaps by roll printing, and covered with enigmatic symbols, scratches and bird markings. Esthetically their shapes and decoration leave something to be desired. But worse, I would be hard pressed to know how to use these expensive containers that would not trivialize them. Hair pins? Candy? Paper clips?

In the last analysis, Charles Schwarz takes no risks with his designs. I found no surprises, nothing unexpected. In fact, because the brooches and bracelets are so similar, it was difficult to distinguish one from another. Although he has mastered the techniques of metalsmithing, his pieces do not always flow esthetically, nor do most of them function easily. Schwarz operates from too cerebral a place (his idiosyncratic head/neck icon symbolizes this perfectly). I would guess that he is intellectually gripped by his mastery, and expects his audience will be as well. What I miss is depth, humor, passion and a stretching of the imagination. His craftsmanship needs to be put into the service of art so that design, function and decoration can merge to form a more unified work.

Metalwork '87

Plum Gallery, Kensington, MD
October 18-November 14, 1987
by Michael Monroe

The fourth biennial juried members exhibition of the Washington Guild of Goldsmiths represents their finest showing to date. The Guild, known nationally as one of the strongest regional organizations of metalworkers, is comprised of individuals whose earlier expressions in metal have come to fruition and are shown here in their mature form. It is because of the sustained efforts on the part of these artists that this exhibition manages to escape the mediocrity that characterizes most regional or local guild membership exhibitions.

Juried by Sharon Church and Jackie Chalkley, these 104 works by 34 artists encompassed many of the same esthetic issues that concern other artists working in metal, both here and abroad. A particular strength within the Guild, which is manifested in the exhibition, is the considerable number of individuals who produce high-quality holloware. The jewelers in the group continue to question the function and intent of their creations as they relate to the human body. While several pieces reflect jewelry making in the traditional sense precious metals, precious and semiprecious stones, filligree and pearls—others utilize new and unexpected materials such as titanium and niobium, plastic and painted wood, to forge new dimensions in their craft.

Fred Fenster continues his masterful handling of holloware in pewter with a dramatic creamer in which restrained tendril obediently follows the contoured lip edge before it sensuously whiplashes into a highly energized handle. In the table piece, *Fetish for a Teacher,* Barbara Grinberg achieves a richly patined surface that metaphorically suggests ancient wisdom contained within a central, enclosed dome. Emanating from the core are conduits from which strings of beads, in varying hues of turquoise stream forth suggesting a fountain of knowledge.

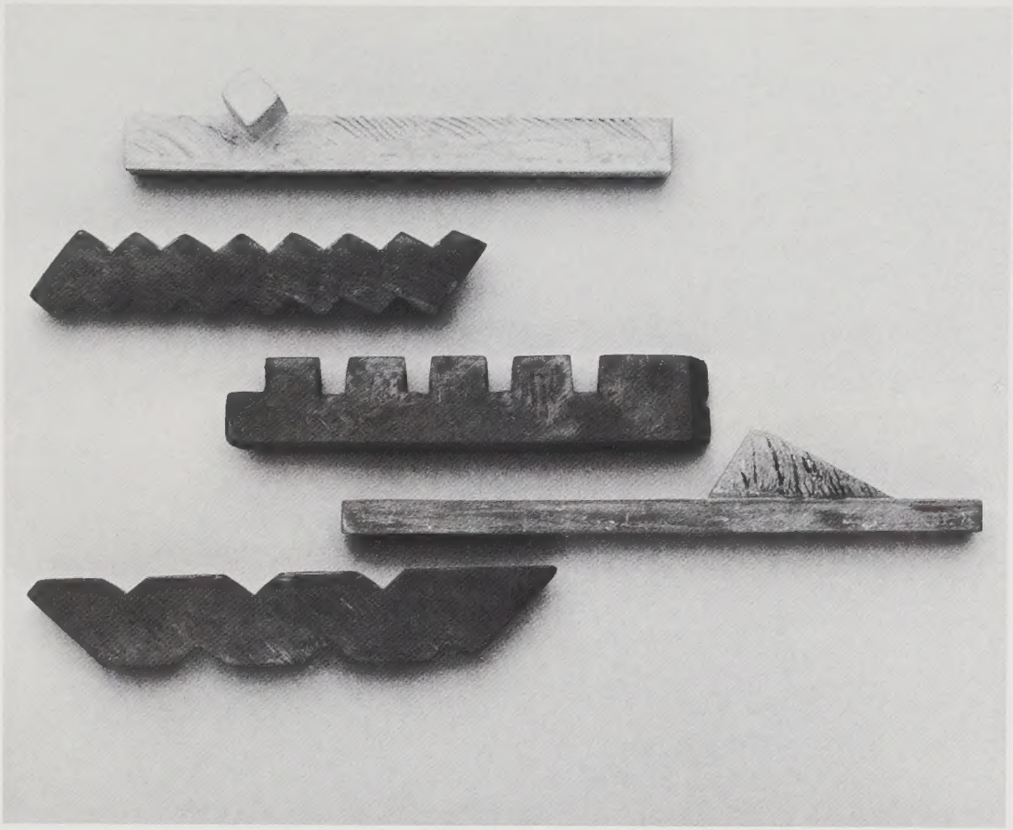
Yvonne Arritt's elegantly twisted silver band swirls around the neck of its wearer suggesting a metallic scarf. A roll-printed pattern of loosely woven gauze on one side creates a subtle but rich textural contrast to the reverse side of this highly polished and crisply articulated sterling collar. Using the unconventional jewelry materials of wood and acrylic paint, Betty Heald's series of *Object Pins* are considerably more successful when seen as a group than when separated into individual pieces.

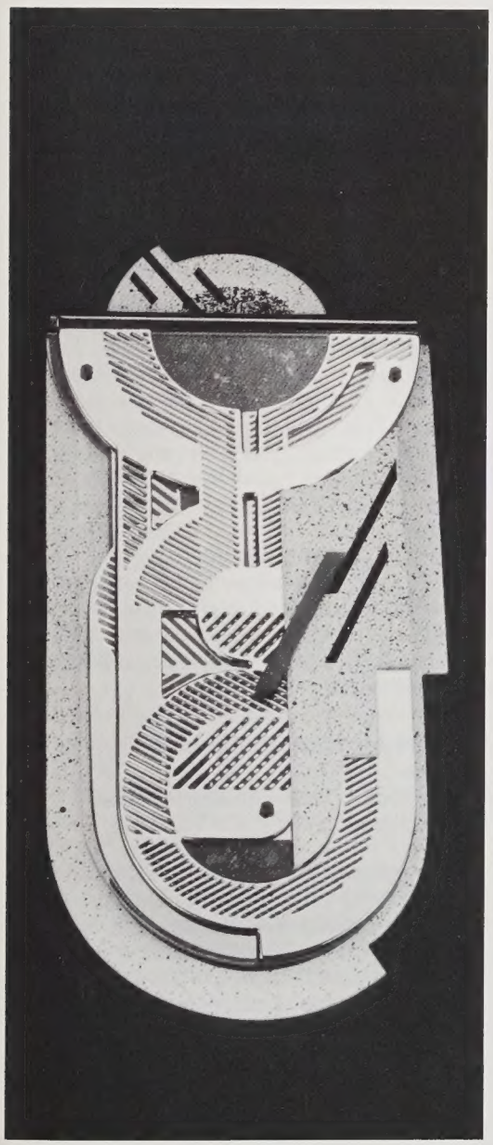
Continuing with the bisected circle as a motif, Gretchen Raber's *Necklace 62087* is a superb example of her exquisitely complex design sensibilities combined with matchless craftsmanship. The several pierced and superimposed layering of diagonally intersecting lines result in continuously shifting moiré patterns that provide infinite visual delights.

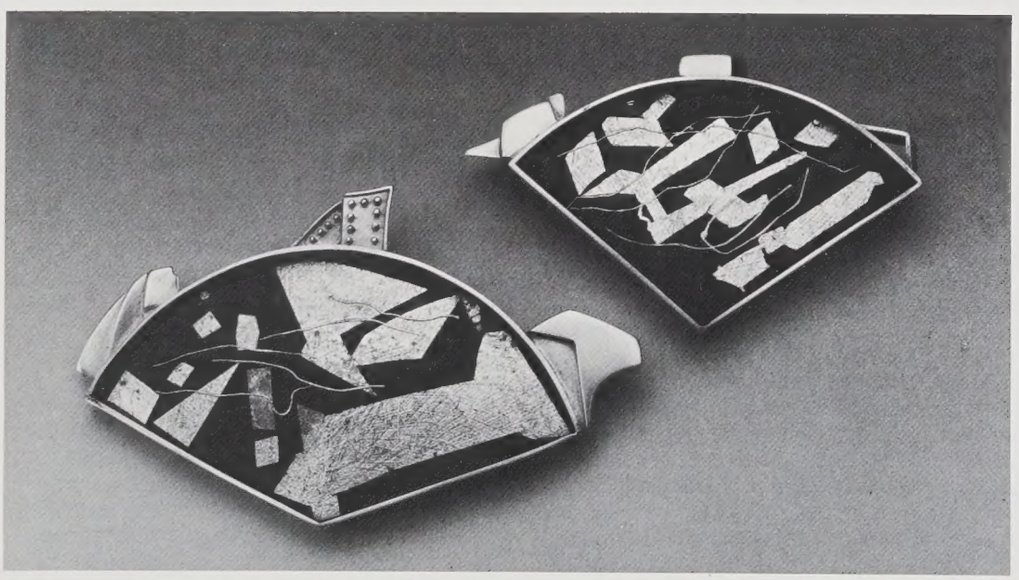
Merging the disciplines of holloware with jewelry concerns in the same piece is an idea that Betty Helen Longhi has successfully developed in her *Bowl with Removable Brooch.* The sweeping and twisting forms are highly stylized and catapult the viewer's eye to a dramatically placed amethyst at the apex of this sculptural form.

Dalya Luttwak's *Japanese Patchworks #3* is a matching pair of pin and earrings. Luttwak achieves this sense of unity without resorting to reproducing the same design in different sizes. Each is a slight variation on the motif and each variation is appropriate to the function of that piece. Her subtle handling of a wide variety of materials and techniques on a small scale and her subtle use of gold epitomize the attitude of understated elegance.

Opposite page, left to right: Charles Schwarz, *Crain with a Shimmering Recollection,* 2⅝ x 3⅝″, 1986; Rose Greher, *Vase,* pewter, scored, folded, 6 x 3 x 2″; Fred Fenster, *Creamer, pewter, raised and fabricated, 6 x 4″;* **right:** Betty Heald, *Objects #1, 2, 3, 4, 5* pins, wood, acrylic coating, ¾ x 5 x ¼″; **bottom row, clockwise from left:** Gretchen Raber, *Necklace-62087,* anodized aluminum, sterling silver, 10 x 6 x ¾″: Yvonne Arritt, *Scarf Swirl* collar, sterling silver, roll printed 6 x 6 x 1″; Betty Helen Longhi, *Bowl with Removable Brooch,* sterling silver, niobium, amethyst, 6 x 8 x 4½″; Komelia Okim, *Fanfare #1, #2* pins, mild steel, fine and sterling silver, 24k gold, Korean damascene, right pin 2¼ x ¼″







Left: David Didur, *New Moon in Rimouski,* copper, raised, tube formed, fabricated, 33 x 21 x 21 cm, 1987. Photo: peter MacCallum; **opposite:** Thea Ernest—**clockwise from left:** *Orange Standing Vessel,* copper, 24 x 13 x 5", 1987; *Hinged Disc,* copper, 23 x 6½", 1987; *Fruit Bowl,* copper, 13 x 8 x 7", 1988; *Cork Ring,* cork, bronze, 1½ x 8½", 1988

A year's residence in Wisconsin, with its ice storms and frozen fields reflected in spectacular sunsets, inspired Komelia O'Kim to produce her strongest jewelry pieces thus far. O'Kim's pins *Fanfare #1 and #2* show freely placed silver and gold fragments on a dramatically dark background. These fragments extend beyond the retrictive border of her fan shapes to suggest the powerful, expanding forces of ice in motion.

Winged Brooch II, fabricated by Barbara McFayden, is a very successful example of the integration of the champlevé enamel technique with precious metals. McFayden's restricted color choices are refined and sensitively keyed to the accompanying materials, thus providing complementary visual roles to the base metals that support the champlevé.

David Didur, Recent Work

Prime Canadian Crafts
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
November 9-21, 1987
by Carole Hanks

The form and substance of David Didur's new work is classic, that is, classic in its approach to the idea of rules and models in esthetics.

Didur takes the constructs of Euclidean geometry and reworks them in a post-modern context. Fabricated shapes echo with geometric rules of construction. One is aware of edges of octahedrons, apexes of triangles and the generation of golden proportions. The structures are measured. The contours are clearly defined. Such clear structuring is the essence of geometry, and its Euclidean, that is to say, Greek base here represents the classical component of post-modernism.

The context of our post-modern thinking is classic, or at least classicist, and the orderly integration achieved by Didur's work represents his striving for classical harmony and form. Shape and line are weighted so that neither is subservient. Internal linear divisions are used to structure and balance sections and the sections are used to establish the proportions and harmony of the whole. Sides and surfaces are related to one another and are contained within each other. The integral structure of the resulting figure implies an underlying model, unseen, which is an intellectual construct of the perfect form.

The ancient Greeks developed the idea of geometric models. A Platonic model existed out of time and space and was approached by the artist of constructed forms through the mathematics of geometry. Geometry was the esthetic solution. Harmony of the parts was found in the proportions of each section to the whole and achieved through strict attention to formal and universal relations. Harmony was employed as an esthetic function. The goal was to achieve perfection the classic figure.

In Didur's work, geometry is still the esthetic solution, and harmonious proportions are still a philosophic goal. However, the idea of three-dimensionality alone does not dominate the work. Surfaces are given considerable attention with the use of patination and occasional applied material to create soft coloration and subtle pattern. They exude warmth, though the forms themselves are cooly ceremonious. The relationship of the two-dimensional surface to the three-dimensional figure is that of a dichotomy in which cerebral and sensual elements are mixed. The resulting objects are at once sumptuous, succinct and defined.

Didur packs volume tightly into space, which results in a monumental quality. His work, however, is not monumental in magnitude. It is scaled down with exacting refinement to intimate dimensions. Thus compacted, it commands a disproportionately great amount of visual space for its size, exuding strength and calm. Such qualities are a necessary part of the ancient classical model, though not always pursued beyond that time.

The difficulty of classicism lies primarily in inextricable attachment to the fashion of one's time. The idea of a universal model is always an interpretation, and perfection may only subjectively be visualized. The general assumption however, is that geometric form is universal and perfect. The intellectual exercise called geometry is the final harmony.

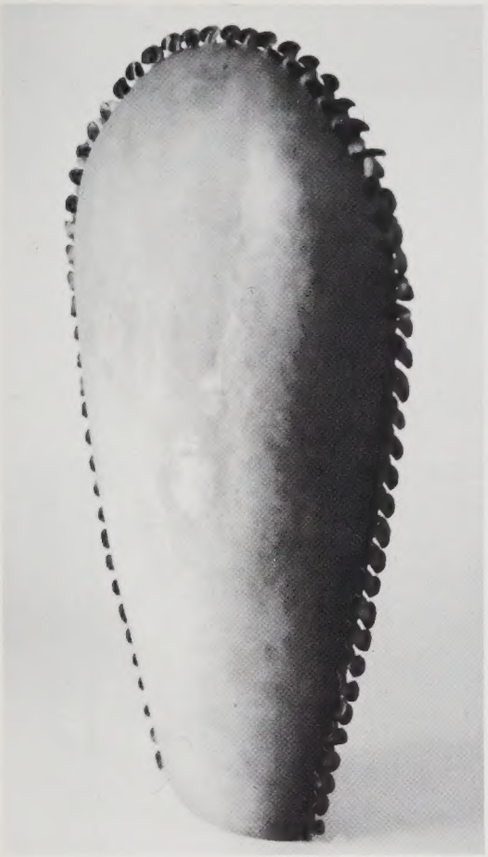
Didur is a very modern classicist. He allows the senses free play within an intellectual figuration. Intuitive and deliberate elements coexist. The shapes of his objectives are reasoned and mathematical, but their surfaces are sensual and organic with color and texture. Although the concepts of classicism are difficult and demanding and require filtering through one's own time and place, Didur's work suggests that the idea is still productive and provocative.

The Container Untamed

Wita Gardiner Gallery, San Diego, CA
November 14, 1987-January 9, 1988
by Carolyn Novin

Containers are more than vessels of transformation and tools for everyday use; they are bearers of pattern and shapers of substances and ideas. In this show, container became arena, where artist as reservoir of skills and visions encountered viewer as holder of perceptions and associations. The objects displayed evidenced a widened notion of "container."

For example, jewelry often holds gems and, as necklace, bracelet, or ring, contains parts



of the human body. Three of the four featured jewelers chose geometric design units. All used metal and other materials for their nonfigurative wearable jewelry. In *Erosion Series Brooch,* Donald Friedlich inverted the usual format of metal-holding-gemstone by setting a gold triangle as gem in an agate matrix. His strategic removal of material released the stone's inherent patterns and translucence. Jane Groover's rings and bracelets of silver and gold were precise and focused constructs, their high polish and refined settings accented by pearls, stones and reticulated areas. In contrast, muted angularity and patterned surfaces distinguished Jan Yager's necklaces of hollow, puffed ovoids, triangles and rectangles; these elements, unlike but compatible, functioned in harmonious interdependency.

Jamie Bennett preferred to assemble biomorphic shapes into wonderful silver and enamel brooches where each enamel was a vibrant medley of matte, flat colors including coral, turquoise, lilac and lime. The childlike spontaneity of Bennett's gestural enamel "jewels" counterpoised the technical sophistication of their containing and connecting settings.

Three artists reified the idea of container as vessel in vividly different ways. Lynne Hull highlighted the deep darkness of *Ritual Bowl*'s center void by attaching a ring of black tubing. Subtle patination, consistent over the spun copper and aluminum form, evoked images of ancient times and venerated use, while the play of opalescent greens and blues on Joan Austin's pouchlike *Mermaid's Jewel Box* embodied the ephemeral. Loom woven of mylar, linen and wire, it referred, in its sensuality, to another container, the sea.

Helen Shirk's *Black Tapestry,* a moveable vessel-within-a-vessel, captured light motifs on its surfaces and through the intersecting lacunae of each bowl to make variable patina effects. Shirk also presented large shallow bowls rimmed by wide, horizontal flanges that engaged the surrounding space. All were patinaed with sprinkled or splashed designs. Small and enlarged versions of similar pattern and color, one on the flange, the other in or on the bowl, involved the eye in visual conversation.

In addition to metal, this appealing show comprised works in ceramics, fiber, glass, paint and wood. Resonances of color and synergistic interaction of various subjects, scale and personal styles made viewing it a delight.

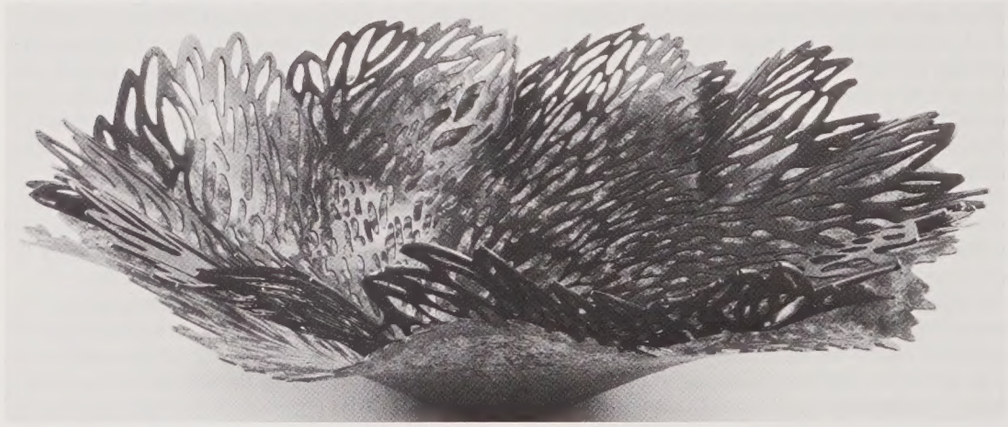
Thea Ernest

Sarah Doyle Gallery, Brown University, Providence, RI
January 28–February 18, 1988
by Mary Bell Howkins

The recent work of Thea Ernest reveals a sensibility clearly independent of the modernist tradition of crisp shining surfaces and reductive form. In fact, it gave this viewer the real if short-lived sense of having happened upon a cache of stunning early Aegean artifacts. The tension, entirely pleasing, between the useful purpose for which vessels are traditionally made and the purely esthetic role that Ernest assigns them, makes each piece seem destined for the summit of a gallery pedestal. And while this duality of role is paralleled in the sculpture/furniture of Richard Artschwager on a much larger scale in another realm of the current art scene, here diminutive size, purity of form and carefully orchestrated patina resonate a kind of archaeologizing presence that most of us only know via a museum context. There, the once-utilitarian vessel is permanently de-utilitarized, and thoroughly estheticized, for the benefit of a modern public. Ernest, consciously or not, incorporates a museum-goer's eye into the very conception of her pieces.

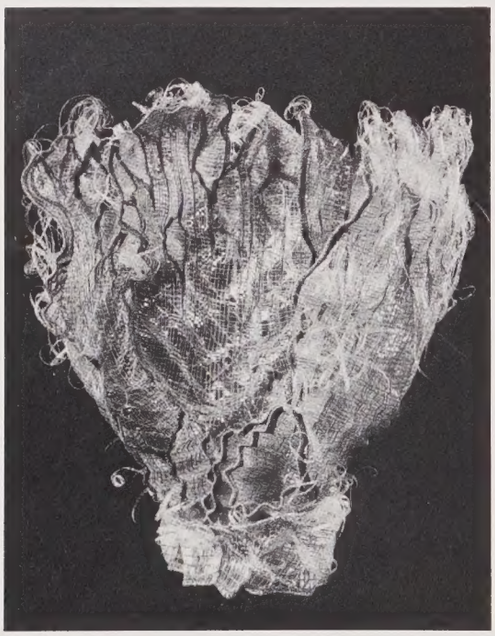
Obvious from the start is that the artist values color instead of reflection in metal, as well as intimacy of surface. This preference has in part determined her choice of copper as a favored material, rather lowly in the hierarchy of metalsmithing, yet remarkably versatile and easily pushed to transcendent stages. *Fruit Bowl* plays a rich, multileveled patina through a subtle tricolor range from base to bowl. At each stage the dominant color is but the prevailing hue in a complex building of patina using deliberately low-hazard chemical processes. (Ernest's long-standing concerns regarding hazard reduction have been spurred by recent findings on accelerated mortality rates among Rhode Island jewelry workers.) The shape of the bowl and supporting stem are elegant and simple, but subtly askew. A repeating convex scallop motif stretches, even lurches, in an understated, almost drunken humor not found in any other pieces, yet characteristic of the show's diversity.

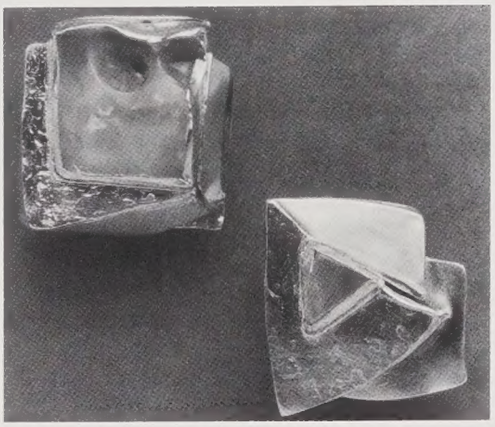
Hinged Disk, as well as several double-shelled bowls, reveals Ernest's fascination with decorative mechanical seams. These are usually assigned a strategic role in surface design, and color often assumes a sudden phosphorescence when it encounters them. The *Disk,* a wide and low-lying vessel, consists of two convex hammered disks joined at the outer edge by a coppersmith's hinge. A ring of wire passes through alternating tabs cut from each surface. The circular expanse of rich patina, predominantly blue with copper highlights, along with the simply patterned



Clockwise from top left: Jan Yager, *Aerial Pattern Rock Necklace,* 1987. Photo: Michael DoBey; Helen Shirk, *Night Rain,* copper, patina, prismacolor, 17 x 3″, 1987; Lynne Hull, *Ritual Bowl,* spun copper and aluminum, 7 x 5″, 1986; Helen Shirk, *Black Tapestry* (double bowl), copper, brass, patina, 17 x 5″, 1987; Jane Groover, *Bracelet,* sterling silver, 18k gold, onyx, pearls. Photo: Nick Juran; Joan F. Austin, *The Mermaids Jewel Box,* mylar, linen, wire, 18 x 12″, 1987

Opposite, left: Nancy Michel, *Earrings,* 18k and 22k yellow gold, boulder opals; **above right:** Alexandra S. Watkins, *Earrings, 18k and 22k yellow gold, boulder opals;* **below:** Nancy Michel *Neckpiece,* 18k and 22k yellow gold, black jade





seam are ultimately governed by an implicit geometry. Yet is is only implicit, since the subtle rising and falling of surface and seam, the planned deviations from geometry, reflect the natural order of things. Underlying the piece's easy elegance is a careful observation of nature's superb sense of shape and fittings.

While the cactuslike shape of two standing vessels in the show seems too literal, despite exquisite painterly surfaces or imaginative interlocking seams, *Boat* is certainly the most lyrical and memorable work of all. With utter simplicity Ernest has succeeded in implying within the confines of the boat itself the presence of the entire sea on which it rides. The result is an evocation of myth, of voyages made for reasons of passion or honor, a medium wholly transcended. All of Ernest's work suggest a rare balance, a joining of coppersmith's craft and a refined esthetic sensibility. Deepened by an understanding of the historical and the natural it is thoroughly post-modern.

Alexandra S. Watkins and Nancy Michel

Body Sculpture Gallery, Boston, MA
October 9-November 4, 1987
by Vincent Ferrini

Alexandra Solowij Watkins and Nancy Michel's work is earthy, yet elegant jewelry in 18k, 22k and 24k yellow gold. Many pieces are of intricately worked gold alone, expressing natural form and texture, while others are set with precious stones or a variety of free-form, partially cut and polished or uncut, unpolished semiprecious stones, such as opal, tourmaline, beryl, lapis, jade and agate. These two distinctive goldsmiths, proprietors of the tiny, exclusively located Atelia Janiye in Boston, are regulars at Body Sculpture. And their current collection is not self-consciously avant-garde but rather a confirmation of many collective years of creative and technical development during which they have never depended upon stylistic flashiness or trendiness. Their art, although sometimes quite bold and strong in design and form, is softened and unified by consistent use of high-karat golds, subtle, matt surfaces and intriguingly delicate, thin-walled constructions. Neither artist uses casting to achieve form; instead, they rely upon "puffing" the thin metal into soft-looking rounded or angular volumes via their skillful repoussé and folding techniques. They add subtle color changes with appliqués of 24k gold on 18k, and pickled surfaces against lightly brushed ones, a perfect example of which is Alexandra's elegant neckpiece. It glistens softly, a confection of golden bons-bons fit for a queen. Nancy, on the other hand, using similar techniques, adds large, dark triangles of softly polished black jade to her neckpiece, thereby removing her creation from the palace drawingroom to its proper place in the palace garden amidst the carefully tended, river-washed stones; decidely oriental in feeling.

Both women readily admit to and are grateful for the lasting influence from years of working with the late Miye Matsukata, whose distinctive jewelry incorporated a delicate oriental perspective. Miye's intensely personal vision is certainly not what Alexandra and Nancy are trying to re-create. They have, instead, allowed the influence and insights of Miye's lifetime of making paeans to nature to wash over them in a benevolent wave, absorbing that which appeals to their individual creative sensibilities.

Even though they share a technique that unifies their work, at first glance, upon closer observation one readily sees important differences. Alexandra's design orientation is more abstract and less light-hearted than Nancy's, as evidenced by the two pairs of earrings. Although both artists are having fun making "pairs" of earrings that do not "match," Alexandra makes powerful microcosms of craggy rocks with watery blue boulder opals, while Nancy plays with the stone and water theme in the form of large, fat, "stone-fish" with mismatched, blue boulder-opal tails. Nancy's sense of humor bubbles to the surface of many of her creations.

One could go on evaluating the differences and similarities of these two engaging artists, especially since they both passed through the metals department of the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts but did so about 14 years apart. While major changes took place at the Museum School in those intervening years, and the backgrounds, lifestyles and experiences of the two women are quite different, their work is very close in general feeling. It should be fascinating to watch the continued development of these clearly outstanding artists.

Dear Editor:
Two columns in the Winter 1988 issue of *Metalsmith* prompted reflection upon the editorial relationship of text and illustration. The columns "Art and Technics" by Tim McCreight and "To Do and Not to See" by Joshua Taylor share the approach of employing text to state a particular point of view while using the work of a contemporary practitioner as an illustration. As a reader reviews these columns, an inseparable graphic relationship between text and illustration is established. The questions are, what is this relationship and what is its editorial content?

In "Art and Technics," the theme is that of color. Color becomes the commonality. The column calls for color consciousness, both technically and esthetically, and the David LaPlantz brooch illustrates the use of color by a contemporary metalsmith. Thus the issue of color is the agent that binds technique, esthetics and contemporary practice together. Yet, even with the theme of color as binder, the illustration remains outside the argument and herein lies a concern of this letter. Clearly the text in "Art and Technics" takes a critical position. It calls for a union within color application of technique and esthetics, something that is implied as being lacking in the field today. The argument is clear in the text, but what of the illustration? Where does it fit into the argument? Frankly, it doesn't. The illustration floats upon the page, never entering the argument. Since the illustration is never referred to in the text, the reader is left with the questions, is the illustration an example of the coalescence of color theory and technical application, or is the illustration an example of what is being criticized? The reader can only speculate.

In "To Do and Not to See," Joshua Taylor examines general art education and argues for a particular model. He gives axioms to follow: "The training should strive consciously to develop visual sensitivity and critical capacities rather than to perfect manual skills." The reader is aware that the author is attempting to be convincing through the use of persuasive statements. One reads Taylor's position and it is clear; it is explicit. The work of Lisa Norton illustrates the column, a relationship to Taylor's text is implied through graphic association. But what do we learn from the association? Since Norton's work is not discussed in the column and since her work has not been thoroughly discussed in print (it was mentioned in the review of "Holloware '87" by Susan Dodge Peters, *Metalsmith*, Fall 1987), the reader cannot access the work in any way other than through the illustration or through personal knowledge of the artist and/or her work. Herein lies another concern of this letter. It is highly unlikely that the reader can come to an understanding of the illustrated work and therefore remains uninformed of its relationship to the article.

Curiously, Norton's work includes a critique of axioms and a questioning of moralizing. Embossed into the walls of her work are "isms" such as: "Work out a simple, clear code of social behavior, see that it is understood and stick to it." "In the environment of serious living, there is little excuse for the novelty of temporary appeal." When these are coupled with the choice to fabricate an odd-sized vessel of questionable utility, an argument is born. In effect, the illustration is the antithesis of the article; the illustration critiques the article.

As an overview, an assessment of the construct of the two columns becomes important. The former does not mention the illustration as part of the critique in the use of color. The illustration is not tied to the text; it drifts within the page graphically. In the latter, the juxtaposition of text and illustration is incomplete because the reader lacks the critical information necessary to set the illustration apart from, and in contrast to, the text. In both cases, the reader is left uninformed.

This letter seeks to question editorial responsibility. It suggests that the graphic relationships of text and illustration in the forementioned articles remain ambivalent formalities that serve only to embellish the pages of *Metalsmith*. As well, this letter anticipates accountability in the form of a more coherent relationship between text and illustration.
—Gary Griffin
Artist-in-Residence
Head, Metalsmithing Department
Cranbrook Academy of Art

Editorial reply:
Gary Griffin's comments point to apparent ambiguity in content that editorial responsibility must and does bear. While the editorial function is to inform, illuminate and at time provoke, it must maintain coherence essential to effective communication. Only by trail and error, experiment and evaluation can the delicate balance of suggestion and knowledge be maintained without losing the reader.

However, the question of "ambivalent formalities that serve only to embellish" presupposes intention rather than ineffective practice. With journals whose audience is for the most part comprised of practitioners, there is a long-standing contention (voiced by this group) that the work and its visual reproduction speaks volumes about current issues, that readers who are pracitioners can determine content quite readily from the visuals and that the written text informs from a distance and is not contingent upon and often is oblivious to the inherent content of the artwork. More importantly, there is a frustration that artists cannot contribute to arguments proposed by the text if they cannot write. In an effort to "open" dialogue, *Metalsmith* hopes to solicit all segments of the community through alternative forms of communication, in this case visuals as "commentary and content," exemplified not only by columns but also by our recent exhibitions in print, end papers, student projects and work in process, like Mark Jordan. If any of these proves to be unsuccessful, they will be a failure of design sythesis rather than intentional flotsam. While we do aim towards a "suggestive ambiguity" that encourages critical inspection, the lack of apparent content can be attributed as much to design and text as it can to the artwork itself.

Dear Editor:
I have followed with interest the columns that Tim McCreight has written and his comments on Society of North American Goldsmiths' (SNAG) activities. I find him to be "on the mark" and very informative. He brings subjects to mind initiating provocative thought and instigating stimulating dicussions. His main thrust seems to me to be that a craftsman without esthetics is a dependable manufacturer and that an artist without craftsmanship is neither an artist nor a dpendable manufacturer. In other words, Tim McCreight seems to be pointing out that we who work in metals are artists just as much as those who carve, sculpt, weave or work in color alone, but only if we use esthetic craftsmanship in our work.

SNAG is fortunate in having someone of McCreight's stature take the time and make the effort to point up our foibles and help set high standards for SNAG members who are starting out in metals or who have come upon the well-recognized "desert of no inspiration."
—Milton Svetlik
Richardson, TX

Dear Editor:
Vincent Ferrini's article in the Spring 88 issue of *Metalsmith* hit home in Texas. So often the articles are too technical, too abstract, too ivory-tower-oriented. Anyway—I loved it! Thank you.
—Joyce Allison Eberts

Dear Editor:
In regard to the cover of the Spring 88 issue and the editorial on page 4, I offer in rebuttal a quote from Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* that in early times "only kings and craftsmen (specifically metalsmiths) could enter the high court." Do we, who understand the noble metals, have any responsibility to foster, maintain and advance the ancient and demanding art of metalsmithing? Is it really necessary for us to reduce ourselves to pins and cardboard in order to "avoid stylistic, formal and conceptual homogeneity"? Safety

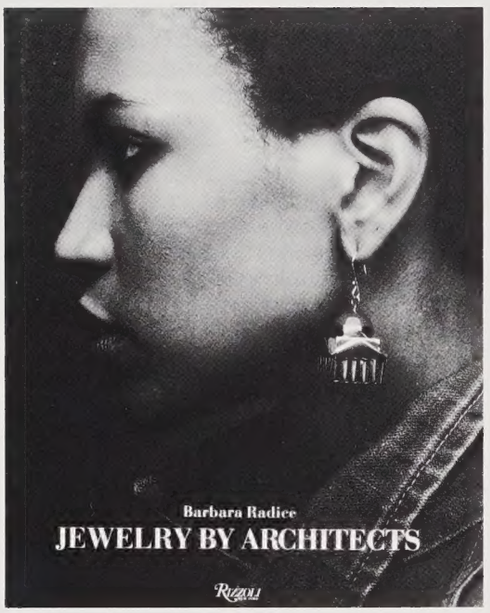
pins and cardboard are a cop-out. I should rather see us regain our status as the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, elevating public taste with work worthy of crowned heads and cathedrals. This does not mean diamonds and emeralds, per se. The LImoges grisailles are only copper and glass, but they are permanent expressions of a high order, and they speak to all the ages. Must we in this latter day equate ourselves with materials from our trash cans and shout obscenities when we have enamel and earth's loveliest materials with which to create visual form? What kind, what hero shall be crowned with discarded bottle caps? What stateman, athlete or Nobelist shall be decorated with old pencils? How will our descendents feel about a fertility-fecundity culture whose gods are crudely portrayed phalluses and vaginas, less elegant than the 30,000-year-old Venus of Willendorf? Have we nothing to offer but garbage, trash, pollution? Are we crumbling to dust? Shall we throw away the hard-won lore of l0 millenia because there is a hole in the ozone? Are we saying that the struggle is hopeless, the race lost?

We are not painters or mere artisans. We are metalsmiths, and we have a unique and honorable place in civilization. Our materials, from the fires of the earth, are the last, best hope of continuing the creative process in a form worthy of civilization's long, slow upward thrust and preserving for generations yet unborn some record of the best that we can be. We are the heirs of all the ages. Let us not, for the sake of carnival sensationalism, discard our unique heritage.
—Jean Foster Jenkins, Professor Emeritus
El Camino College, CA

Supplemental Information

In the article on "Patination for Small-Scale Studio Use" by Charles Lewton-Brain that appeared in the Spring 1988 issue, the recipe for cupric nitrate patina was not given. It is as follows:

Cupric Nitrate	300g
Water (distilled)	To the 1000ml level
Dishwashing detergent or alcohol	2-3 drops



Jewelry by Architects
by Barbara Radice
Rizzoli, NY, 1987, 119 pp., 179 illus,
107 in color, $35

This book documents a collection of jewelry that collector Cleto Munari commissioned since 1982. Well-known international architects, including Americans Michael Graves, Richard Meier and Robert Venturi, were approached to design these gold jewels. The book is arranged alphabetically by architect. In addition to the beautiful photographs of actual pieces, there is a short interview with each architect on the subject of jewelry. Their simple jewelry sketches supplement the work. The book is truly handsome. It is nicely organized, and the quality of the photographs and printing is excellent. Rizzoli has once again produced a first-class publication.

In the introduction Barbara Radice writes: "Perhaps the most fascinating thing about these 150-odd pieces of jewelry is that they have nothing to do with any other set of jewelry designed over the last two thousand years." She further states that this collection of work, "represents the debut of post modernism in the jeweler's craft, or, if you like, the first true figurative modernization of jewelry design as an applied art since the twenties and thirties . . . the most advanced figurative research of the last 20 years." Should we accept these statements at face value? What are her credentials? Whnat research has she undertaken in this field?

We find that here statements could not be further from the truth. The book presumes to offer us original work, a unique and novel point of view and a departure from the accepted design sensibilities of contemporary jewelry into new frontiers. This reviewer, because of the promises of the author, expects these "protean Renaissance figures" to offer new design insights. We wish that they had. We should add, if this volume is any indication, these architects are possessed of an arrogance born of ignorance. In fact, what is clear is that these architects did not do their homework. This book illustrates designs that are eclectic, sometimes plagiarized and, at best, consonant with the work of goldsmiths who much earlier led the way in design innovation. If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then Claus Bury, John Prip, Wendy Ramshaw, Bruno Martinazzi, Friedrich Becker and many other innovative goldsmiths of the last 30 years can consider themselves flattered.

Examples of this appropriation of style and attitude can be seen in such books as *Rings Through the Ages* by A. Ward, J. Cherry, C. Gere and B. Cartlidge; Rizzoli, 1981, pages 20, 22, 184 and 185. *Jewellery of the Ancient World* by Jack Ogden; Rizzoli, 1982, also illustrates similar concepts on page 21, as does J. Anderson Black in his *The Story of Jewelry*; William Morrow, 1974, on page 131. The styles that rely on the figurative should be compared to the figurative pioneer Bruno Martinazzi. Books such as *The Art of Jewelry* by Graham Hughes; Viking, 1972, illustrates Martinazzi's work on page 155, as does *Contemporary Jewelry* by Philip Morton; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970, on page 82. The architects who use the "abstract" style borrow heavily from the work of Wendy Ramshaw. The catalogue *Wendy Ramshaw: A Retrospective Survey 1969-1981* from the exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1982 illustrates the design similarities.

Radice suggests that credit be given to this group of architects for "The spurning of precious stone . . . a reaffirmation of the superior power and value of the design over that of gems, as was the case during the Renaissance." The "Good as Gold" exhibition and catalog organized by the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution in 1981 illustrates the more than 90 American artists making jewelry out of nonprecious materials and demonstrating that design, concept and communicative ability has long been a major concern of artists in our field.

Barbara Radice notices, however, that in this collection there is a "curious uniformity of materials used: almost exclusively yellow gold and semi-precious stones . . ." This is not difficult to explain. She states in her foreword that the collector, Munari, "became more and more enthusiastically involved in assembling an increasingly international collection, to the point of setting up a small company to employ goldsmiths with the exclusive task of producing the pieces by hand as they were designed by the architects." Judging from the looseness of the architects sketches in the book, and assuming that these drawings are similar to those the goldsmiths had to work from, it is easy to understand why the goldsmiths inter-

preted them with such consistency. These artisans could only produce work using techniques and materials with which they were already acquainted. Technical and material innovation was precluded by this unfortunate collaboration in which the objects came from the same workshop and were produced by the same hands. This has to result in uniformity. The pieces are almost all highly polished and predominantly geometric. Washes of color in the drawings are converted to colored stones.

It is interesting that Radice spends a quarter of her one page introduction on a discussion of what "very famous architects" are like. She says, "There is no cultural event of significance that can do without their very special presence, support or advice." She continues, "Big architects are often progressive intellectuals . . . In general, they are better dressed than artists, travel a great deal, and are always calling each other on the phone . . . They know how to have a good time and are open to adventure . . . They can be recognized by a special quality in their gaze, conveying an amused, cynical detachment, and by the sly smile of those who possess secret information." If the author is right in her characterization, then perhaps the "sly smile" she refers to suggests deception; we just might be fooled into believing they have something to offer the field of contemporary jewelry. It is clear to me that if in fact they do possess secret information, specifically about the field of jewelry, they are not sharing it with us.

We should not be seduced into purchasing this volume because of its pretty pictures. It so totally misrepresents the recent history of our art as to warrant total improbation.
—Stanley Lechtzin and Daniella Kerner

The Jewellery of René Lalique

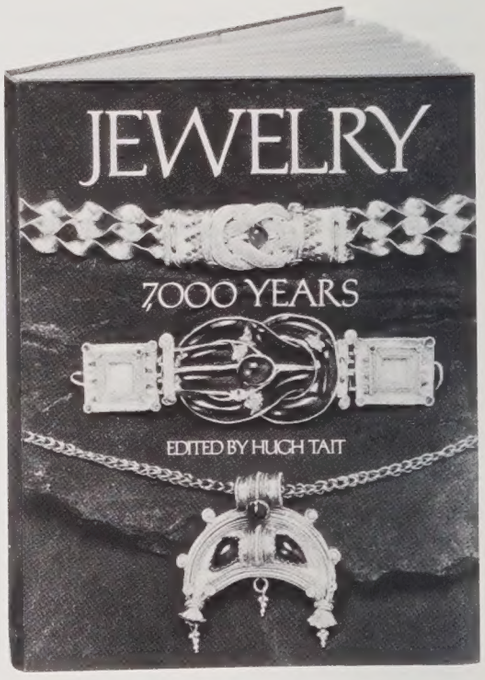
by Vivienne Becker—catalog of the exhibition of the same name May–June, 1987, The Goldsmiths' Company, 1987. Available through Goldsmiths' Hall, Foster Lane, London EC2V 6BN, England for £21, including shipping, pb

The Jewellery of Rene Lalique is a *tour-de-force* among books on jewelry and as such is a magnificent addition to the library of the imaginative craftsperson or jewelry historian. Fully 195 pieces, the composition of the entire exhibition, are clearly illustrated, 139 in lavish color. In addition, 40 renderings in black and white are included, some of which present instructions for execution in French. A few of the finished jewelers derived from these renderings are included in the exhibition, and anyone with at least a basic background in jewelry construction can deduce their processes of execution with little effort.

Vivienne Becker, whose previous literary efforts include *Art Nouveau Jewelry* organized this exhibition. This is the first time since the early 1960s, when only a few pieces of Lalique's work were shown at Goldsmiths' Hall, that such an exhibition has been mounted. While this exhibition has gathered what is probably the greatest quantity of jewels by Lalique ever displayed together, there is no chronological order, so it is not possible to track Lalique's career as a goldsmith/jeweler to the point where his interest in glass predominated. In some cases the same types of jewels are displayed together, but there is no continuity in the sequences of design presented; in many cases different types of jewelry are presented across the same spread pages. This, however, is not necessarily a detriment. Rather, this discontinuity promotes "meandering," for repeated enjoyment to discover inspiration in perusal, especially for jewelers. In every presentation the components of each piece are described as are, in some degree the processes involved in creating it. Lalique, of course, utilized many nonprecious materials in his work, such as semiprecious stones, ivory, horn, enamel and, certainly, the cast and carved glass for which he was later to become famous. It must also be realized that much of Lalique's jewelry was not made to be worn but simply visually enjoyed and contemplated. Lalique frequently employed positive and negative space in his work and also used devices in which a human leg, for example, also became part of the horn of an animal. As strange as it may seem, the essence of Lalique's work is not beauty but his almost constant controlled use of beauty, which, on close or longer inspection, becomes horror or ugliness. Yet, much of the work has the serenity and austerity of presentation derivative of Japanese interpretations of nature.

A beautifully written and well-researched homage to the collector in general and to Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian (Lalique's patron) in particular is presented by Dr. Maria Teresa Gomes Ferreira, Director of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon, from which a large part of the examples of Lalique's work were lent. Certainly, the early patronage of Gulbenkian, also known as "Mr. Five Percent" for his dealings in the early oil trade, was essential for Lalique's initial success. An excellent background/ biographical sketch of Lalique and his artistic times by Vivienne Becker is also presented.

In summation, all in all *The Jewellery of René Lalique* is a link to a difficult time of especial delight and foreboding as the centuries changed, much as we are experiencing now. Through the work Becker has produced, the modern jeweler can share in this time, become inspired, reflect and perhaps come to create anew.
—Mike Rosenthal



Jewelry 7000 Years

An International History and Illustrated Survey from the Collections of the British Museum edited by Hugh Tait
Abrams, NY, 1987, 225 pp., illustrated, $37.50 hc

When the British Museum opened in 1753, it already had on hand some extraordinary jewels such as the famed *Phoenix Jewel*, the gold pendant bust of Elizabeth I made in 1570–80, as well as designs by Hans Holbein the Younger. Thus, it is not a matter of surprise that this museum has preserved, and houses, a glorious collection of jewelry, commencing with the earliest pieces that represent man's fascination with metals and minerals as a means of personal adornment. From 5000 B.C. to the present, from Europe to the Far East, Asia to Africa, the British Museum has assembled the glittering trophies of status and superstition, among them the most splendid in which men reveled.

Jewelry 7000 Years is a mind-boggling panorama, yet a highly successful attempt to put between covers, in a succinct and pictorially enticing manner, the treasures and the knowledge thereof, housed in that behemoth of an institution. In fact, this volume is based on an earlier catalog that accompanied the exhibition "7000 Years of Jewellery" mounted in 1976 by Hugh Tait, Deputy Keeper of the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, and a world-renowned scholar. In its present, more beguiling format, with Mr. Tait as editor (as well as contributor of the sections on European Jewelry 1500-1700, Functional Finger Rings and Cameos in Jewelry, and European Jewelry 1700-1950), the work is a

collaborative effort of 20 curators of 20 different departments. It includes 400 superb photographs and contains new material on the Hull Grundy collection, and the results of recent research. The text is a tour de force, which, although densely packed with information, is remarkable for clarity and concision. Every item discussed in the text is numbered, with easily matched and numbered illustrations (including the often-neglected dimensions of the pieces), and can be further studied in a detailed table of references for the illustrations. The annotation is so thorough that the sometimes distressing hunt is unnecessary here, and the reader's attention can be firmly anchored to the jewelry being discussed.

The technical material offered is quite unusual. Tait, as he demonstrates in his new work *The Waddesdon Bequest,* a revolutionary scientific study of the jewels in the famed Renaissance collection in the British Museum, is an expert in being able to blend the historian's knowledge of the stylistic fingerprints of historic periods with precise technical analyses. In so doing, he and his colleagues perform an unusual service for craftspeople, opening doors into history that were heretofore sealed.

SNAG members will find themselves, happily, predated as far as 500 A.D. by organized fraternities of metalworkers in Central and South America, and even earlier by guilds of gold- and silversmiths, in Rome and other Mediterranean centers, as well, of course, by the medieval guilds.

The artisanry of the jewelers' ancestors, to point out just a few instances, forms an astonishing bond to cultures physically as well as historically remote. Niello, for instance, makes its first appearance around 27 B.C. In remote Peru, around 300 A.D., the Mochica knew embossing, hammering around molds, stretching and shaping with repeated annealing, sheathing and inlaying, plating, casting both solid and hollow objects. The hollow casting was done by *cire perdue.* The Celts, as early as 500 A.D., astonish with their virtuosity, as well marvel over the trappings of the Sutton Hoo Treasure. Their skill in cloisonne inlay has never been surpassed. Among their bag of tricks was the use of hatched gold foil beneath garnets, to reflect light through the stone. (The garnets themselves were cut into sheets, then wheel-cut into geometric shapes and adorned with gold inlay.)

In Dumbarton Oaks one can view a sister object in the study of *opus interrasile,* a method for highlighting the quality of gold with patterns cut out of the gold with a chisel, as in Roman times, and then pierced with a round awl, chased and carved, or cut through with tiny chisels, as in Byzantine jewelry.

Metallurgists will learn about "Tumbago," the warm golden color, which, to metallurgists of another time, exemplified in the making of "sacred" gold from a base metal, a concern with the relationship of deities to natural phenomena. Thus, when acid ate away the copper with an alloy, the resulting pure color was confirmation of the belief that the external must reflect the fundamental nature of the material world.

Such concerns aside, it is humbling and comforting, as well as sometimes amusing, to have demonstrated the symbols and forms that have been in man's inventory from the beginning of humanly determined time. The reef knot, a prominent motif in Hellenistic and Roman times, actually comes from Egypt, as an amulet, around 2000 B.C. (see #16, also #187). Add the snake, the sunburst, the torc and, indeed, not only the heart shape, but the bean shape. The Holy Thorn Reliquary (#509), closed, is a prototype of Elsa Perreti's popular item. Open, it is a work that astonishes. See also the Calderesque ensemble on page 51, #108; note the dates and be amazed.

There are other entertainments as well; a cautionary quote from "The Lapidary of Sir John Mondeville": "a good diamond often loses its virtues by the sins of him who bears it." It is tempting to imagine a society where morality could be signaled by its jewels!

And for those whose pleasure it is to search for professional roots, there is the wonderful Flemish painting by Petrus Christus, painted in 1544, portraying a wealthy couple with St. Eligius, the goldsmith's patron, in the shop of a jewel goldsmith, replete with the evidence of the trade.

These are but a few of the offerings of this almost inexhaustible compendium. For the layman or the scholar, *Jewelry 7000 Years* is an essential companion. It is a treasury to feed the eye and fuel the imagination. There are two bibliographies, one for the general reader, and another for those wishing to pursue more scholarly information.

"Would you want your son to be a jewelry historian?" This is not a facetious question, but rather a disturbing one, since thus far the bulk of the scholarship in the field comes from across the ocean. One can only hope that as jewelry studies expand in this country we can look to more serious studies emanating from this side of the Atlantic, doing the honors for the jewelry housed in our museums.

—Jean Appleton, Director, Jewelry Design Resource at The Fashion Institute of Technology and founder of the Society of Jewelry Historians, U.S.A.

Disegni su titanio/Designs on Titanium
Colori su titanio/Colors on Titanium
Movimenti su titanio/Movements on Titanium

by Pietro Pedeferri
Published by Clup, Milano, Italy, 1981-84, text in English and Italian

I first heard of this set of books during the 1984, New York Society of North American Goldsmiths' conference. I had long looked forward to the opportunity to read them. Ah, but as in so many things, a little bit of hipe goes a long way. I found myself gravely disappointed in what was touted to be the definitive work on the reactive metals.

The disappointments begin with the photography. I should say first that the pictures are interesting to look at, in fact, many are quite beautiful. But, those that are in color are reproduced in dull flat inks that have no relation to the brilliance and depth that this media is capable of generating. They are also, in many cases, black and white! We are given no indication of the size of the work and, worse, none of it is jewelry or even vaguely identified. Are we looking at full size works of art or micrographs? There is a hint in the introduction to the third book that they all may be only centimeters and less in size.

The author states in the introduction to the first book that he intends to share with us both the theory and practice of coloring titanium. The language is romantic, flowery and filled with paragraph-long sentences that leave the mind in a whirl. Much of the information on the anodizing process and the equipment would require a chemical engineer or an electrical engineer (or better yet, one of each) to interpret. What we apparently do have is an excellent monograph on the anodizing process as a tool for the study of fluid dynamics. The engineering information and the actual titanium work deal with recording the motion of fluids on the surface of titanium. Pulsating electrical currents are used to record the wave front of a fluid as it moves. It produces some exceptional visual effects but little in the way of expanding the artistic potentials of this medium.

In conclusion, I found these books interesting to wade through. And I do mean wade! For the artist already working in this media this work is a curious deviation. But I would not recommend the books to an artist wishing to learn about anodizing the reactive metals. The information is elsewhere, in easier to understand form. True, there is little written on this subject to date, but these books could be more of a hindrance to an aspiring artist than a help.

—Bill Seeley

Monumentality On Scale and Sculpture...In Search of Monumentality

On Scale and Sculpture...In Search of Monumentality

by Robert Griffith

As a moviegoer in the 1950s and 60s, I watched intently as insects and crustaceans were transformed into gargantuan monsters by manaical scientists bent on the destruction of our planet. As giant spiders and flies toppled telephone poles and overturned cars, while witnesses screamed in horror, I was nonetheless fascinated and entertained. I marveled at their play on my imagination through their transformation in scale.

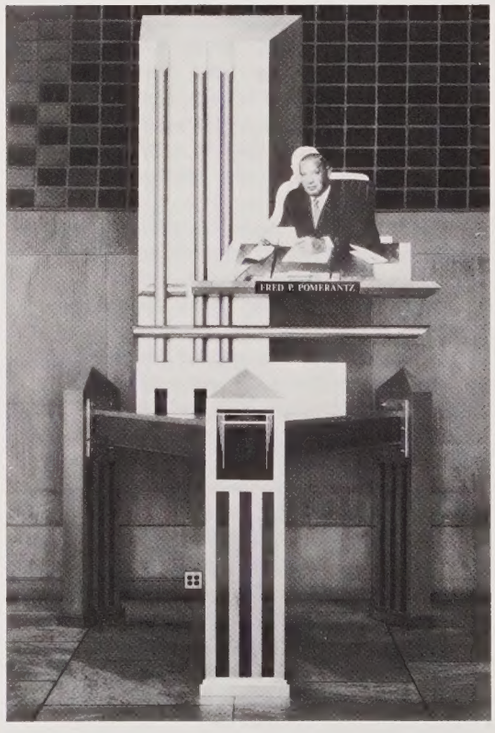
Today, when my students ask which scale would best suit a particular work, I usually answer with aquestions like: How do you want the piece to be viewed? What impact will the piece have? Consequently, I continually ask myself what is it that fascinates me in working at a particular scale. While I often hear craftsmen claim that they work with their chosen material because it is in their blood, I wonder if this is also true for scale. Is the scale in which we work a psychic or physiological requirement of our medium?

This is not to say that we have a metalsmithing community working in entirely the same scale. We can, however, make certain observations about this discipline that tie us together in our response to scale. Metalsmithing studios contain similar tools and equipment, and, as students, we pursued similar technical processes. This is part of our educational process, and it often yields predictable results. Then, there are the restrictions—not only the financial limitations of materials, but also the limitations of the space in which we work. By in large, however, I would have to say that we work in a certain scale because it feels "comfortable" to us.

Scale can, and probably should, be a response to subject matter, image, concept, form, function and site or display. Scale is a response to something familiar by comparison. It is the size of work as compared to some constant or standard. Something seems to happen to the very nature of the piece when the scale is changed that challenges our normal apprehension. This is accomplished by the artist in an intuitive manner on the gut level and is an important part of the relationship between artist and public. It is a component of the artist's visual language, as important as decisions regarding form, color and image.

Considering the fact that craftsmen are often preoccupied with their material, it is interesting to observe that sometimes an increase in scale may be accompanied by a switch to a new material. I am not certain what factors enter into this decision. It could be that the new material has opened the door to larger works in an inspirational sense, or perhaps larger-scale works were restricted technically by the other material. But we can conclude that pieces made of certain materials do not work well (visually) on a number of scales. The decision of scale is thus a very important part of the creative process, as well as the viewer's response to the work as it relates to its visual environment.

For example, works that approximate six feet in height evoke an automatic association with the human figure. At this scale we may make reference to what we know as "life size." Works that approach 12′, 15′ or larger, become "monumental," regardless of whether the subject is a clothespin or a memorial to George Washington. Jewelry-scale works require a more "intimate" viewing environment. Working at a large scale offers an opportunity to play a more significant role in architecture or landscape. Conversely, working in "miniature" plays a paradoxical role with established visual associations.



Top: *Totem,* steel, forged, fabricated, sand blasted, 3 x 8 x 21″, 1985. This piece marks Griffith's transition from vessel to sculpture. Collection: Fernando Camayo Fund; **above:** *Fred Pomerantz Memorial,* aluminum (some anodized), photoengraved magnesium, fabricated with MIG welding, 8 x 8 x 13′, 1987. Sculpture located at the Fred Pomerantz Art and Design Center at Fashion Institute of Technology, NYC

At a recent exhibition at Marywood College, architectural designs were represented by models in cardboard, plaster and balsa wood. I have always been interested in how "models" bring the viewer to imagine the work on a totally different scale. They ask the viewer to participate in a fantasy. As I walked through the "Art in Archtiecture" show, I was drawn to memories of my earlier days of model railroading. What I was experiencing was a feeling of having the ability to be in control of that environment. Creating that community on the train platform with all its small buildings, trees and people, was a very pleasant experience. The train, as it went around the track, traveled to foreign places in my imagination.

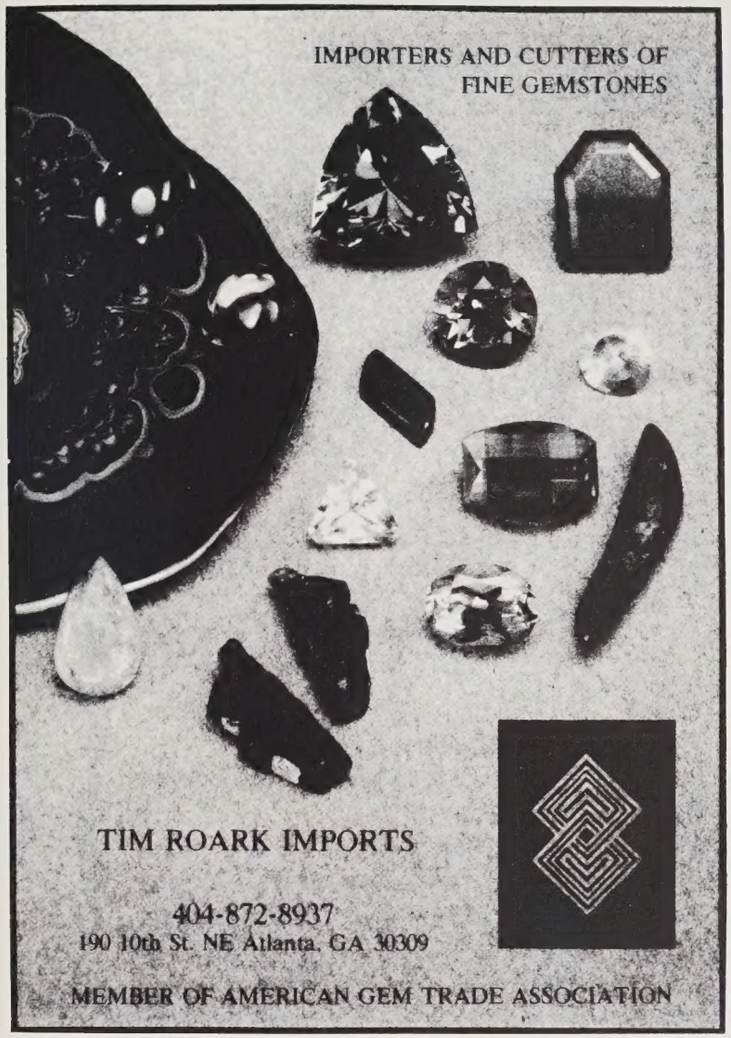
For me, as an artist whose training and background was "objectmaking" and a "craft"-oriented response to form and concept, the switch to large scale was a somewhat logical transition. My work took on a new role, however, as I considered it functioning in large-scale environments.

I wanted to create a larger format for my work, but, more importantly, I wanted to create a sense of "monumental presence" through scale. This was the primary concern in my design of the *Fred P. Pomerantz Memorial.* Scale played an important role in projecting the image of this man in relation to those who knew him and to the impact he had on the garment industry. The size of work (13′ high) also provided an opportunity to respond to a particular architectural environment.

Despite this foray into larger scale, vessels still hold a certain fascination, for they, too, can retain a certain monumental presence, in addition to being ceremonial. My vessels of 1984-85, and jewelry pieces as early as 1979, have a distinct relationship to my current sculpture because of my overriding concern for monumentality. I somehow feel that although the sculpture does not have the utility of the vessels or the jewelry, they share "monumental" concerns in a metaphorical sense.

The attraction for making sculpture, or any art, for that matter, for me is the imaginative correspondance that exists between the artist and the rest of the world. The desire to communicate our "vision" is what drives us as artists. Metalsmiths have chosen a certain discipline that best suits this vision. It matters little whether the outcome of this is in the scale of jewelry, holloware or sculpture. It is important, however, that these tangible results are as much a look inward as they are an outward expression.

Robert Griffith is assistant professor at Marywood College in Scranton, PA and a practicing artist.



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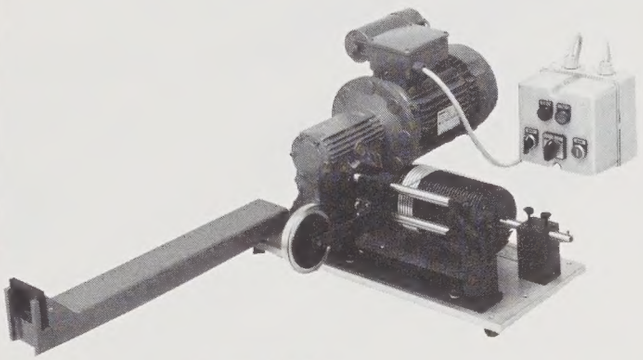

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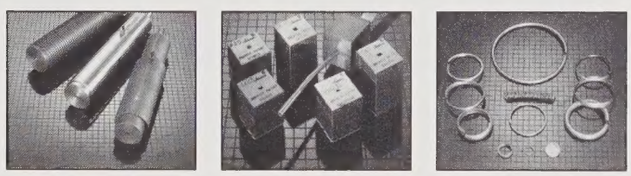

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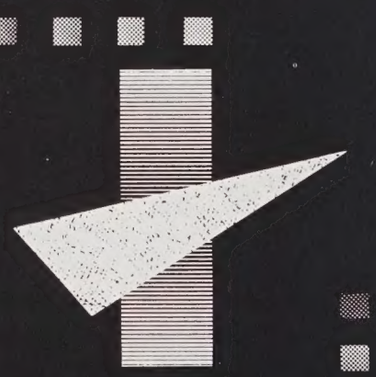

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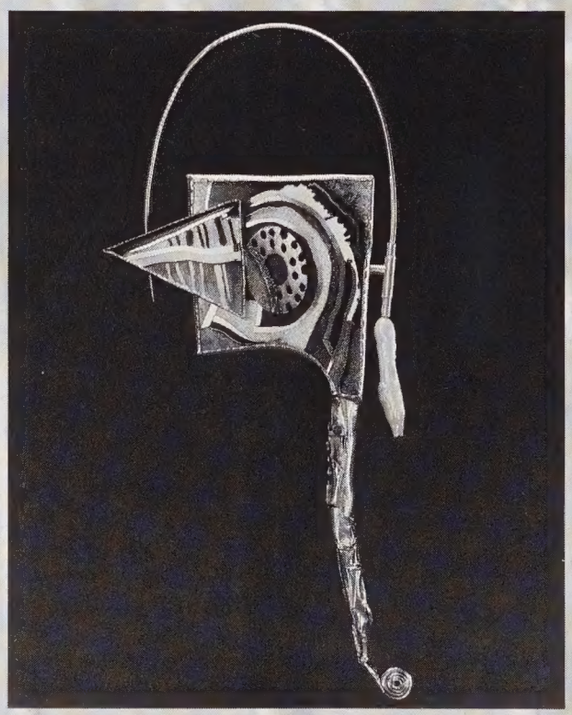

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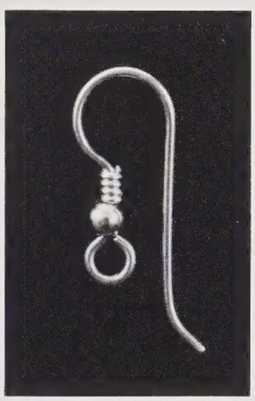

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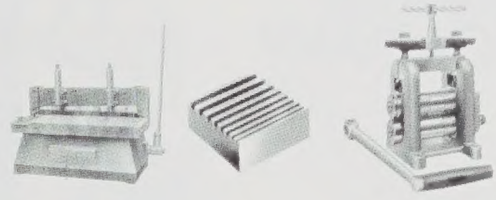

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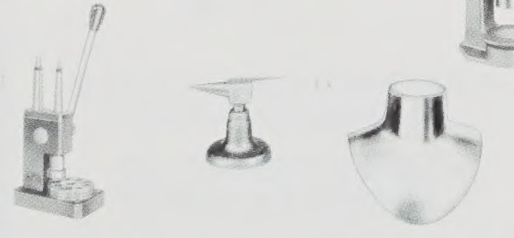

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The Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) was formed in 1970 to promote contemporary gold- and silversmithing. SNAG serves as a forum for the free exchange of ideas in the field.

Technical information, esthetic and educational issues, and other topics of interest to the practitioner and teacher of contemporary metalwork are disseminated by SNAG publications and conferences. Professionals and students, collectors, gallery owners and enthusiasts will all find SNAG interesting and useful. From pure sculpture to production jewelry, SNAG offers information on the entire range of the exciting field of metalsmithing.

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Periodically, SNAG sponsors major exhibitions of contemporary metalwork. In the past, SNAG shows have been mounted at the Renwick Gallery, the St. Paul Museum of Art and the Phoenix Museum of Art. A special exhibition of work by Distinguished Members traveled to major museums in Europe in 1979.

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SNAG also operates a slide library and rental service, which contains the portfolios of Distinguished Members and other notable metalsmiths. Members can rent or purchase slices at minimal cost.

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Metalsmith is the only magazine in America devoted solely to the metal arts. Prominent jewelers and designers, silversmiths, blacksmiths and sculptors are featured in full-length articles. Process and technique are explored in essays on design and production, materials and equipment. Regular columns by leading authorities discuss the latest gallery shows, newest books and current museum exhibitions.

The *SNAG Newsletter* is published bimonthly and is available to members only. It features timely information on exhibitions, workshops, conferences and job opportunities from all across the U.S. and Canada.

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SNAG offers several types of memberships, each tailored to a specific level of involvement in the field of contemporary metalsmithing.

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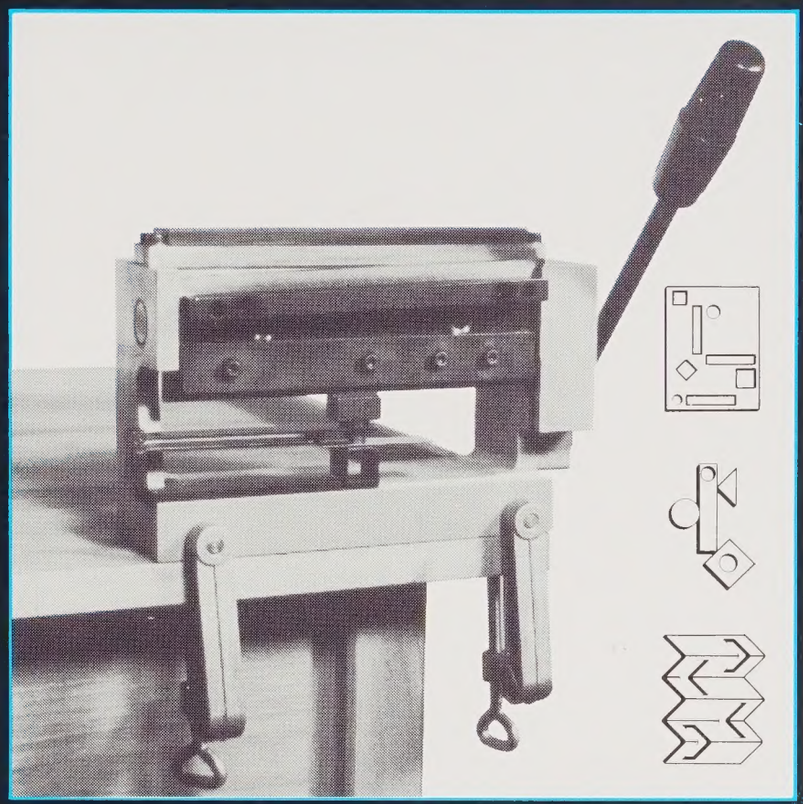

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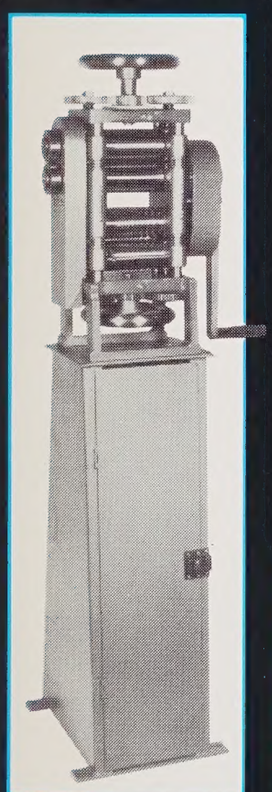

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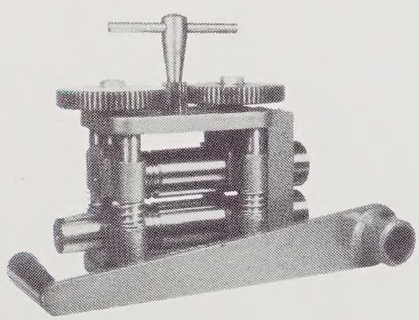

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